

# THE KING OF GLORY.



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# COMPLIMENTARY



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*With sentiments of the  
highest personal regard and  
best wishes, this volume is most  
affectionately presented.*

*This* ..... 18 .....





THE  
KING OF GLORY

—OR—

THE MOST IMPORTANT EVENTS

—IN—

THE LIFE OF JESUS CHRIST,

—WITH—

*THEIR PRECIOUS AND PRACTICAL LESSONS  
TO HUMANITY.*

—BY—

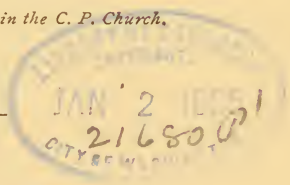
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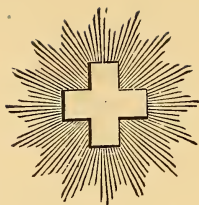
*Author of "The Three Kingdoms," and Minister in the C. P. Church.*

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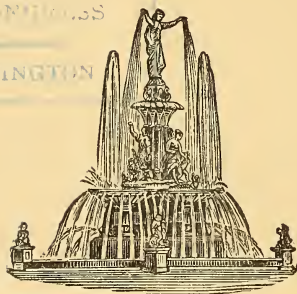
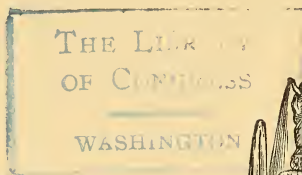
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TO

THE LORD AND SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST, WHO DIED FOR ME, AND  
HATH WASHED ME IN HIS OWN BLOOD, UNTO WHOM IS ASCRIBED  
POWER, DOMINION AND GLORY FOREVER, IS THIS LITTLE VOLUME  
MOST HUMBLY AND AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED,

BY THE AUTHOR.







The King of Glory is Lord of all,  
The Majesty of Heaven, before whom we fall—  
A Royal Prince, on a royal throne,  
With a sceptre of love and a power unknown.

---

Who is this King of Glory? the Lord of hosts; \* \* \* the  
Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle, he is the King  
of Glory.—BIBLE

---

This King of Glory, or Lord of hosts,  
Is the Morning Star of a world once lost;  
The Sun of Righteousness, shining bright,  
O'er lands once wrapped in sable night.



## PREFACE.

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The divine record, which gives the life-story of Jesus, is incomplete. The inspired historians are silent upon many points of intense interest. The four Evangelists give but a brief synopsis of the public ministry of the Heavenly Missionary. Their Gospels are all confessedly fragmentary, omitting even to catalogue many of his mighty miracles and matchless discourses. What little they have given, however, suggests, to the fruitful imagination, much more that must have happened to fill up the vacant spaces in, and give symmetry and fullness to, the sacred story.

The grandest lessons of the Saviour's life touch our hearts most deeply, when our vivid imaginations supply much, which makes them more human and home-like. The force, fervor and fullness of his words, works and ways sink deepest into our souls, when we link positive with revealed truth and, with his sacred biographers, view his grand, but mysterious life from the varied stand-points of a four-fold Gospel. The power and glory of that divine, but humanized life can only be seen and felt, in all its richness and adaptation to the wants of suffering humanity, when its precious, and practical lessons stand out before the world as the fruits of the most vivid imaginations, or the products of the most highly cultured intellects. These grand lessons, of his matchless life, are ever lifting men to a truer, purer and nobler manhood, while the saddest memories, of his vicarious death, are constantly opening new fountains of joy and gladness in the souls of redeemed humanity.

In this volume we have gone back of the cradle, and beyond the cross. Yet we are not unconscious of the fact, that we have but imperfectly written a life, which was perfect in all its parts—ininitely perfect in its embryo state, and absolutely perfect in all its grand developments.

Yours truly,

L. McWHERTER.

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*L M Whetter.*

# THE NATIVITY OF THE KING.

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## CHAPTER I.

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*Unto us a child is born.*—ISA. 9: 6.

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THE birth of Jesus is the greatest event upon record. It is one of the grandest links in the world's history. The night of the King's nativity was the beginning of a new era to all subsequent ages. The Manger of Bethlehem was the birth-place of new hopes, and a better history for struggling humanity through all time to come.

The King of Glory became a Helpless Babe; took upon himself the form of a servant, and was found in the likeness of mortal man, that he might fill the world with the wonders of his grace, and heaven itself with the fullness of his glory. His birth mingled the fears of helpless humanity with the brightest expectations of future happiness. At his incarnation, the star of hope, like a signal-light, hung in beauty and loveliness upon the eastern horizon of a dark and benighted world. In his life, the sorrows of earth ripened into the joys of heaven. And in his death, the shame and agony of the Cross melted away into the sceptre of power and the throne of glory.

Jesus was most emphatically a Child of both promise and prophecy. The declarations of the venerable

patriarchs, and the predictions of the ancient prophets blended with perfect harmony in pointing to the advent, and describing, with the utmost accuracy and clearness, the person, character and glory of the Coming Messiah. Some of these interesting promises and Messianic prophecies were confided to ancient tradition for the benefit of those ages; but the more important were consigned to the Sacred Records for perpetual preservation. The pious Jews and the devout of all nations waited long and anxiously, with deepest solicitude and most ardent desires, for the confirmation of these sublime declarations, and the consummation of these inspired predictions.

Strange as it may seem, in the Saviour's mysterious and miraculous birth we have simply the verification of many precious promises, and the fulfillment of many princely prophecies given to the world centuries before the advent of Heaven's earth-born King. Yes, as a prelude to his coming, the unerring fingers of promise and prophecy pointed, for thousands of years, to the time and place of his manifestation in the flesh. Finally, the Pledged King made his strange appearance, and light broke in upon a dark, dead world, to roll in floods of glory over the great sea of human life.

Jesus was truly a Child of Promise. The Old Testament is full of pledges the most sacred of a Coming Saviour. The primitive promise, made to Adam, pointed to Christ as the Seed of the Woman destined to bruise the serpent's head. The leading promises, made to Abraham, found their fulfillment in the person and purposes of Jesus. He was also the Seed through which this patriarchal father was to bless all the families or nations of the earth. Heaven's richest benediction up-

on the head of this ancient worthy contained a most positive promise of a Coming Messiah, through his lineage. It assured him that the Seed promised to Eve should also be the Offspring of his own royal progeny. Jesus was just as truly the Promised Seed of Abraham as he was the Immaculate Son of God. He was both the Promised Prince of Israel and the Pledged Redeemer of the world. The captive race waited and watched with deepest interest, most intense anxiety, and, at times, with brightest anticipations for its Royal Deliverer. Israel's types and shadows, symbols and sacrifices, private fasts and public festivals, all kept prominently before the minds of the people her Promised King. They also bore the most sacred testimony to all nations, of his exalted character and merciful mission among men.

The fabulous legends of antiquity contain many brilliant points illustrative of the miraculous birth, marvelous life, and mysterious destiny of the Virgin's Son. The true and the beautiful of these old legends found their fulfillment in the person of the Nazarene, and were but the symbols of his most eventful life. Many of these trite traditions were preserved by means of unique and poetical images, until they made an indelible impression upon the mind of the ancient world. These traditional legends betoken the possibility, at least, that God portrayed more fully to our first parents the nature and mission of the Promised King, than he afterwards gave to the Jews through Divine Revelation. Hebrew tradition itself annihilates the pernicious effects of the fall by means of a Voluntary Oblation, the offering of a Just Man, who was to be the salvation of



all who put their trust in him. The traditions of the Arabs also taught that an indulgent and merciful God would finally vouchsafe to fallen man a Way through which to implore his unmerited forgiveness. These and similar traditions, associated with the bloody sacrifices of innocent victims, established among all nations, kept alive in the memory of many generations, the Promised Victim, which was afterwards slain upon Calvary.

Jesus was preëminently a Child of Prophecy. The prophetic age was burdened with the predictions of a Coming Deliverer. The highest anticipations of deliverance were at times almost universal. The popular mind of the Jews was often wrought to its highest tension. Burning hopes glowed through these Messianic prophecies, like fire through the clouds of heaven. They fired the hearts and centered the thoughts of all Israel on the one great event of time—the Nativity of the King of Glory. The millions of pilgrims, who flocked to the annual feasts at Jerusalem, carried these expectations of a great coming Jewish King throughout all the nations of the earth. The sequel shows that this prophecy was not speculative. Inspired predictions never harmonize with erroneous or mere speculative opinions. Inspiration's truths are all absolute. They reflect the lights of heaven and the shades of hell.

Ancient sages had been singing for centuries of a brighter and better day that would dawn in the fullness of time upon their wretched race. The songs of Zion's seers were rich with the thought that the King of Glory at his coming would usher in a golden age upon a world steeped in sin and saddened with sorrow. The voice

of inspiration had been heard, all along down through the ages, fortelling the advent of a Great Redeemer who would come as the Consolation of Israel and the Desire of all Nations. In fact, there is a golden chain of prophecy, the first link of which was clasped in the consecrated cradle of the New-born King, and the last of which was riveted in the empty sepulchre of the Risen Saviour.

Centuries after the fall of man, the venerable old patriarch Jacob lay upon his death-bed away down in the land of Egypt. The dying father called around him his sons, the twelve patriarchs, and pronounced upon each of them a prophetic blessing. But when he came to the fourth-born, with Messianic light from the eternal world bursting in upon his departing soul, he said, The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a law given from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be. Moses, the great Leader of Israel, said by way of encouragement to the people, A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you, of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. Balaam, bribed by Balak, to curse Israel, in the valley of willows, being enlightened by the Spirit, in a Messianic vision, exclaimed, I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel. Isaiah, the prince of prophets, saw him as a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Ezekiel, the prophet of the Captivity, beheld him spring up as a Plant of great Renown. Daniel, in his glorious vision, recognized him in the person of the Holy Prince. Micah

saw him coming forth as the Ruler in Israel. Haggai hails him as the Desire of all Nations—a King who should fill the Holy Temple with his matchless glory. Zechariah saw him growing up as a Tender Branch, and seated as a Chief Priest upon his throne, bearing his glory in a rule amid the counsels of peace. While Malachi witnessed his rising, as the Sun of Righteousness, with healing in his beams for all who feared his glorious name. Now, Jacob's Anticipated Shiloh, Moses' Great Prophet, Balaam's Rising Star, Isaiah's Slain Lamb, Ezekiel's Plant of great Renown, Daniel's Holy Prince, Micah's Ruler in Israel, Haggai's Desire of all Nations, Zechariah's Fruitful Branch and Malachi's Sun of Righteousness, all pointed prophetically to the coming Nativity of the King of Glory.

It was but natural that these precious prophecies, pointing to the advent of a Mighty Redeemer, should cheer up the drooping spirits of a fallen race, and guild the horizon of their future with the hope of a glorious day that would soon dawn in all its magnificent splendors upon a lost and ruined world. But, in the lapse of time, the shadows darkened. The religion of the Jews became burdened with traditional rites and ceremonies. The worship of the only true and living God had been interwoven with homage paid to dumb idols. Base impostors, substituting memory for hope, had grouped around their own cradles the wonders of prophetic lore which clustered around the anticipated incarnation, and pointed out so minutely the high and tragical destiny of the King of Glory.

But through all these dark vicissitudes the pious of earth did not lose sight of the divine assurances of a

Coming Saviour. They lived in the faith of an Expected Messiah; and, in default of further revelations from heaven, their very lives became prophetic of his incarnation and power in the world. Even the guilty and wretched of the race were still looking through these dim and distant prophecies for the mysterious advent of a Mighty Deliverer. The most profound historians, both Jewish and Pagan, inform us that at the time of the King's birth, an intense conviction prevailed throughout the entire East that ere long a Powerful Monarch would arise in Judea, and, beginning at Jerusalem, would extend his dominion over all the nations of the earth. Hence, the Eastern sages bent their steps aright when, in keeping with the voice of prophecy, they followed his natal star to the City of David in search of the new-born King of Glory.

A brief biographical sketch of the King's parentage will not be without interest in this connection. It will also lead us most naturally to the events immediately connected with His humble though royal birth. For these interesting reminiscences we are indebted largely to uninspired writers, and consequently can not vouch for the truthfulness of all their detailed statements.

Joseph, the adoptive father of Jesus, was the son of Jacob, and a just man, the noblest of God's creatures. He was an honorable Jewish patrician, whose fortune had likely been swallowed up in some political revolution, or Judean war, leaving him only his manly arms and humble trade by which to support himself and a large family. Israel had no castes in her society. Hence manual labor was no disgrace to her purest and best sons. Some of her tribes, it is true, were more

illustrious, and some of her families more noble than others. But among the twelve tribes, Judah had always held the preëminence. Among her many families, the house of David was ever the most highly honored. And Joseph was both of the lineage of Judah, and also of Davidical descent. Yet this high-born old man was a contented widower, and an humble carpenter.

Joseph was poor in this world's goods, but he possessed treasures of grace, and a sanctity of soul which fitted him preeminently for the position he was called to occupy. He was not the most powerful, but the safest; not the wisest, but the most worthy of all the sons of Judah to become the protector of the Maiden Mother and the guardian of her Infant Son. So Mary did not lower her dignity so very much after all by espousing the village carpenter. In fact, their marriage proved to be a holy and most happy alliance, fraught with blessings alike congenial to both. Joseph proved to be a loyal husband, and in affection a most devoted father, whose chief and constant thought was the care of his Virgin wife, and the protection of her Royal Offspring.

Mary, the mother of Jesus, also sprang from the lion tribe of Judah and the royal family of King David. She was born in the city of Nazareth, and educated in the Holy Temple at Jerusalem. The names of her parents were Joachim and Anna. Her father was of Nazareth, and her mother of Bethlehem. They married. Their lives were pious and faultless before men, and plain and right in the sight of the Lord. They grew rich, but were exceedingly charitable. They had lived together for about twenty years in the esteem of men and the favor of God, but without children, when they made a



solemn vow, promising the Lord if he would favor them with an offspring they would devote it to his most sacred service for life.

Just after this had occurred, Joachim, and others of his tribe, went up to Jerusalem with their offerings to attend the Feast of Dedication: but when the high-priest saw him, in company with his neighbors, he despised both him and his offerings. He also asked him why he, being childless, had presumed to appear among those who had children, claiming that the offerings of one who had been judged unworthy of an offspring would not be acceptable to God. This unexpected, and unjust reproach confounded Joachim with shame and sorrow. So he would not return home, lest his neighbors should publicly reproach him in the same manner; but retired to where his shepherds were keeping their flocks in the wilderness; and there he fasted forty days and nights in prayer and supplication to his God.

Soon after this an angel stood by him with a great light, and seeing he was troubled at his appearance, said, Joachim, be not afraid, for I am an angel of the Lord, sent to inform you that your prayers are heard, and your alms accepted of God, who hath both seen your shame and heard you unjustly reproached for having no children. The angel then informed him that God was the avenger of sin, but not of nature; and that when he caused barrenness it was that the offspring might not be the product of lust, but the gift of his grace. The heavenly messenger also referred very touchingly to the barrenness of the beautiful Sarah, afterwards mother of Nations; then to the beloved Rachel, mother of Joseph, the deliverer of his people: and finally

to the honored mother of the valiant Samson, and the holy Samuel, who were numbered among the distinguished judges of Israel.

The angel then told Joachim that his wife Anna should bring forth a daughter, that they should call her name Mary, that she should be filled with the Holy Ghost, and according to their vow be devoted to the Lord from her infancy. He also said that the child should neither eat nor drink any thing unclean, nor have her conversation among the common people; but be reared in the Holy Temple, that she might not fall under slander or suspicion of any thing that was bad. But his most marvelous revelation was, that, in the process of years, this same holy child, who was to be born in a miraculous manner of one who was barren, should herself, while yet a virgin, in an unparalleled way, bring forth the Son of the Most High God, who should be called Jesus, and according to the signification of his name be the Saviour of all Nations. The sacred messenger then gave Joachim the following sign as an evidence of the truthfulness of his words, and quickly departed: When you come to the golden gate of Jerusalem, you shall there meet your wife Anna, who, being very much troubled that you returned no sooner, shall rejoice greatly at your coming.

The angel then appeared to Anna, who mourned both on account of her barrenness and supposed widowhood, and informed her also that a daughter should be given her whose name she should call Mary, and that she should be blessed above all women. He said she should be full of grace from her birth, continue three years with her parents and then, being devoted to the service



of the Lord, she should not depart from the Temple until she arrived at the years of discretion; and while yet a virgin and a maiden she should bring forth a Son, who by his grace, name and works, should be the Saviour of the world. The heavenly comforter then gave Anna the same sign he had given her husband, and suddenly disappeared. So they both left the places where they were, and, in keeping with the angel's prediction, met at the golden gate of Jerusalem, where they related each to the other their angelic visions; and being fully satisfied, with the promise of an heir, they rejoiced and gave due thanks to the Lord, who exalts the humble and rewards the faithful.

In due time Anna brought forth a daughter, according to promise, and they called her name Mary. The child increased in strength, and they made her chamber a holy place, suffering nothing uncommon or unclean to come near her. When she was a year old her father made a great feast at which he presented the Virgin to the chief priests, who took her and said, The God of our fathers bless this girl, and give her a name famous and lasting through all generations. The old legendary writers surrounded the childhood of the Virgin with a multitude of strange prodigies which are not sufficiently authenticated to warrant a notice in this connection.

When Mary was three years old, accompanied by other undefiled daughters of the Hebrews, they brought her into the Holy Temple with suitable offerings by which their vow was perfected. They presented the interesting little Virgin to the high-priest, who received and blessed her, saying, Mary, the Lord God hath magnified thy name through all generations, to the very end

of time ; and placing her upon the third steps of the Altar she ascended the stairs with the grace of one of perfect age, and all the people loved her devotedly. Her parents were also filled with wonder, and left her praising God, because she did not desire to return home with them, but willingly remained with the other virgins in the apartments assigned them, where they were to be reared and educated in the Holy Temple.

As the young Virgin advanced in years, she also increased in all of the graces and perfections of womanhood. So, when she arrived at the age of fourteen, the wicked could lay nothing worthy of reproof to her charge, and the good all admired her purity of life and chaste conversation.

At this juncture the high-priest made a public order to the effect that all the virgins of her age, being of proper maturity, who had public settlements in the Temple, should return home, and, according to the custom of their country, endeavor to get married. The other virgins all readily yielded obedience to this command. But the Virgin Mary said she could not comply with it, because her parents had devoted her to the Lord, to whom she had also vowed perpetual virginity. This brought the high-priest into a difficulty. He did not wish to dissolve a vow, neither did he desire to introduce a new custom to which the people were entire strangers. So he called the principal persons of Israel together and counseled them as to how he had best proceed in so difficult a matter. They unanimously agreed to seek directions from the Lord. This resulted in a call for all of the marriageable men of the house of David to come and bring their rods, that he by whom

the Lord would show a sign, might become the husband of the Virgin Mary. So, when they presented their rods to the high-priest, a dove proceeded out of the rod of a certain widower advanced in age, flew upon his head, emblematical of his purity, and every one saw plainly that the Virgin was to be given to Joseph. When the usual ceremonies of betrothing were over, Joseph returned to Bethlehem to set his house in order for the marriage. But the Virgin, with several other maidens appointed to attend her, returned to her home in Galilee.

The long looked for period had arrived. The time for the incarnation of the King of Glory was at hand. The angel Gabriel received the mysterious message for earth, and gladly withdrew from the shining courts of heaven. The celestial messenger spread his vast silvery wings, and with lightning speed left behind him the golden streets, the palatial mansions, the emerald walls, and the pearly gates of the Heavenly Jerusalem. He soon reached the end of his delightful journey with his message of mercy, and a countenance all aglow with angelic joy. Descending softly through the hazy air like a falling star, he most gracefully lowered himself in the humble town of Nazareth. The heavenly harbinger sought at once the presence of the meek and modest maiden, and hailed her with his mysterious salutation, as the highly favored of the Lord. The virtuous Virgin was much troubled at his angelic presence, wondrous ways, and marvelous words. His unexpected eulogy, his strange story, and his celestial majesty, were well calculated to stir her sincere soul to its utmost depth. But the merciful messenger mildly said, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favor with God. The Holy Ghost shall come

upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee, and thou shalt bring forth a son, and call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end. This was glory enough for the highly honored Maiden. Virginal maternity was without a precedent under the sun: yet Mary, the purest and holiest of all Virgins, believed its announcement by the holy angel, and meekly replied, Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it unto me according to thy word.

Then the angel departed, and, in a few days, Mary hastened to the hill country of Judea to visit Elizabeth. When she entered the home of Zacharias and saluted her cousin, Elizabeth recognized in the voice of her salutation the Mother of her Lord: and, being filled with the Holy Ghost, she pronounced a prophetic blessing upon the humble Virgin, which called forth from her lips that beautiful and ever memorable canticle of praise in which she magnified the Lord for her exaltation in being chosen Mother to the world's Promised Redeemer. Mary remained with Elizabeth about three months, up to the birth of John the Baptist, and then returned to her home in Nazareth of Galilee.

Soon after this, Joseph went from Bethlehem to Nazareth for the purpose of marrying his betrothed Virgin. But, seeing her condition, he was much distressed in mind, and sorely grieved at heart. Not knowing what course to pursue, he finally purposed privately to put an end to their agreement, and as privately to put her away. But while he meditated upon these things, an

angel appeared to him in a dream, banished every doubt of her guilt, and confirmed every hope of her innocence. Joseph knew now that Mary had been guilty of nothing inconsistent with her sacred vow of virginity, but that her miraculous conception was a supernatural work of the Holy Ghost. So he willingly married her, whom he also kept in purest chastity until after the birth of the King of Glory.

About six months later, the Roman Emperor decreed that the world should be taxed. The customs of such occasions required every man in Israel to be at his native city. So Joseph returned with his family from Nazareth to Bethlehem. When they reached the little city, they found the public inn full to overflowing. They were the recognized descendants of David, Israel's greatest King; but their honored lineage could not secure lodging for them in the great house which still bore the name of their royal ancestor. They were forced, at length, to seek shelter for the night in a dismal, doorless, stony cell—a cave used for a stable.

The time had now fully come for the fulfillment of the Messianic oracles delivered by the prophets of Israel. The night of the Nativity came silently on in all its oriental loveliness. The ashen gray began to mingle with the snowy white around the borders of the distant horizon. The evening shades drew nearer, and a thin, hazy appearance gathered, like the smoke of incense from off some vestal altar, over the honored city of David. The soft twilight, like silvery mist, melted away in the deep blue sky, and the beautiful stars of night, as if kindled by one electric flash, burst forth into flame all over the broad domains of darkness. A



strange light enveloped the cave, and a signal glory veiled the canopy of the heavens. Here the holy Virgin gave birth to the world's Royal Redeemer, wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger. Here prophecy found its fulfillment: For unto us a Child was born. Here the New-born King, whose throne has been exalted above all the kings of the earth, found his first bed among the beasts, and his first cradle among the poor. But he, who was born in such an humble place on earth, lives in the most exalted state in heaven, where he will reign through everlasting ages as the King of Glory.

However, the humble manner in which this Extraordinary Child made his advent into the world did not long conceal the glory of his coming. The holy angels soon made known to some honest shepherds, who were on the plains of Bethlehem, keeping night-watch over their tender flocks, the incarnation of the long Expected Messiah. The celestial song flooded the skies and rolled over the earth, in the richest strains and sweetest melodies of heaven, as the angel throng chanted in rapturous joy, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace and good will toward men.

“In heaven the rapturous song began,  
And sweet, seraphic fire  
Through all the shining legions ran,  
And touched and tuned the lyre.

“Swift through the vast expanse it flew,  
And loud the echo rolled:  
The theme, the joy, the song was new-  
'Twas more than heaven could hold.

“Down through the portals of the sky  
The impetuous torrent ran,  
And angels flew, with eager haste,  
To bear the news to man:

“Peace on the earth, good will to men,  
From heaven’s all glorious King.’  
The world in solemn stillness lay,  
And heard the angels sing.”

The heavenly music ceased. The angelic vision disappeared. The delighted shepherds took counsel together and started for Bethlehem. They soon reached the cave, beheld the Babe, and offered, in deepest humility, the mite and homage of the poor to their Infant King.

It seems strange that these humble men of toil were informed, while kings and princes were left in ignorance of the advent of the King of kings and Lord of lords. Even the devout priests, honored Pharisees and learned Rabbis knew nothing of the Wonderful Babe in the Manger. Hence they had taken no account of the Virgin-born Prince whose throne was to be set up in the hearts of millions, and whose kingdom was to endure as the sun, for ever and ever.

The high estate and lowly condition of Heaven’s earth-born King were alike the marvel of men and the wonder of angels. So, when the enraptured shepherds had found and worshiped the King of Glory, they returned to their flocks, praising God and publishing through the mountains the marvelous story of that holy night, and the glory that should follow in the days to come.

The nativity of our King should be commemorated,



with gifts of love and songs of joy, by young and old, in all lands and in all ages. It should be made an event, annually, of great joy to all people—joy to the poor, because the King came to make them rich: joy to the rich, for he came to make them richer still: joy to the simple, because he came to make them wise unto salvation: joy to the wise, for he came to give them true wisdom: joy to the mourning and sorrowing ones of earth, because he came to comfort and bind up their broken hearts; and joy to the guilty, condemned and despairing ones, for he came to take away transgression, bear the sins of many, and give himself a ransom for all men. Thank God, the flood of joy, which flowed from the Manger of Bethlehem, is wide enough to encompass the earth with its glory, rich enough to bless every human soul with its mercy, and deep enough to roll on through all time and over boundless eternity.







The Infant King.

## THE INFANCY OF THE KING.

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### CHAPTER II.

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*Go and search diligently for the young child.*—MATT. 2: 8.

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THE most sacred testimonials, from earth and heaven, cluster around the innocent infancy of Jesus. They draw our fond hearts, like chords of love, to the cradle of his holy innocence, where wisdom and glory, in embryo, slept with the slumber and developed with the growth of our Infant King. Whether the Holy Babe was sleeping or playing, the sacred innocence of celestial infancy was ever enthroned upon his gentle brow. An atmosphere of mildness and meekness always filled the home, and surrounded the pathway of his feeble infancy.

Never before had meekness and humility been combined with such royal majesty and matchless glory. The Infant King was the Son of the Highest,—the Heir of Heaven, but of poor, humble, earthly parentage, neither distinguished for learning, riches, rank nor power. The Saviour could have astonished the world at his coming. He might just as easily have made his appearance, clothed in the splendors and glories of heaven, with a shining retinue of angels to herald, with golden trumpets, his royal advent into the world. But he came not in the state of a King, or with the glory of a conqueror; with the parade of a monarch, or the trumpets

of victory. He chose to come, however, simply in the weakness of human poverty, and the helplessness of innocent infancy. But, in this Baby King the power of heaven was only veiled for a time with the weakness of earth, and the strength of omnipotence clothed in the feebleness of the flesh. For this Infant of a few hours was also the Ancient of Days.

The Holy Family was still at Bethlehem. They had no doubt moved their head-quarters from the stable to a more congenial home. The Royal Babe was cradled no longer in a manger. He was now lulled to sleep in the loving arms of his maiden mother. Joseph and Mary doubtless looked with deepest reverence and purest affection upon the sweet face of the sleeping Infant by night, and fulfilled, with tenderest solicitude and the most fervid devotion, the ministrations of parental love by day. They pondered, alike in their hearts, the things which they had seen and heard, wondering what manner of man their Son should be; and how his would affect their own and the world's future destiny. Thus a few days passed quietly by in the humble home of the Holy Family, filled with loving service and growing hope, with no eye to cast an envious glance, and no heart to entertain a hostile feeling toward the New-born Heir to Israel's throne.

The important events which clustered around the infancy of the Baby King were well calculated to inspire the world with the hope that he would one day mount the royal throne of his father David, establish it in peace and righteousness, and reign as King of kings to the end of time. But the evangelists do not dwell upon the minor incidents connected with his infancy. Luke enters

somewhat into details, with a singular sweetness in his sacred narratives, but does not dwell at length even upon the few which he mentions. In all probability he gathered these fragmentary, but fragrant, sketches from the consecrated lips of the Virgin mother herself. The depth to which she buried, and the sacredness with which she treasured, all these events in her loving heart made her the fit receptacle of such delicate truths, and the most natural historian of his infant years.

The four inspired Gospels of his Maturity mention but four events connected with his infancy. These we will now present in their regular chronological order. Then we will notice briefly some of the more interesting incidents narrated in the uninspired Gospels of his Infancy.

The first of these sacred events was his Circumcision. This occurred in Bethlehem, according to the directions given in the Mosaic law, when the Infant King was but eight days old. The Supreme Lawgiver had voluntarily placed himself under the law given to regulate human life. Therefore he rendered perfect obedience, to all its requirements of him, as its legitimate subject. While a minor he rendered passive obedience through the agency of his parental guardians, and afterwards, actual obedience in his own personal submission to, and fulfillment of, all its divine precepts and sacred obligations. He came not to destroy a single commandment; but to fulfill every iota of God's law then obligatory upon men. Hence he willingly submitted to the bloody rite of circumcision, and thus, in this highly typical ordinance, prefigured, the flowing of his own sacrificial blood upon the cross, even when but a Tender Infant



only eight days of age. Thus early his blood began to flow, to cease only in death.

But when they circumcised the Holy Infant, they also gave him a name. As the angel had predicted, they called him Jesus. This name was so rich in meaning, and so full of promise, that its significance should have been recognized at once by all Israel. Jesus, Jehovah's salvation, was a personal name to be borne by One who had emptied himself of all his glory that He might dwell, for a time, sinless among sinful men. Christ, the Anointed of the Lord, was his official name, afterwards borne to indicate that he was a Prophet, Priest and King in Israel. There is something in a name when worthily borne. The name, Jesus Christ, is potent. It bears a hidden mystery of such marvelous sweetness and wonderful power as often moves the stubborn will, melts the hardened heart, and subdues the rebellious soul. To consecrated lips this magic name is sweeter than honey or the honey-comb; to cultivated ears, it is heavenly music, and to all loving, devoted hearts, it is joy unspeakable and full of glory.

“Precious name, oh, how sweet!  
Hope of earth and joy of heaven!”

The second of these memorable events was his Presentation. This took place at Jerusalem when the Holy Infant was forty days old, or thirty-two days after his circumcision at Bethlehem. At this appointed time Joseph and Mary carried their Royal Son into the Holy Temple to present him to the Lord. They brought the Lord of the Temple helpless into the Temple of the Lord. The offerings required of the poor on such oc-



casions were two turtle-doves, or two young pigeons. With this humble oblation, fit emblem of their innocence and purity, the maternal Virgin presented herself and Babe to the officiating priest for, and received, his blessing of ceremonial purification. Jesus, being the first-born Son of Mary, was of necessity redeemed by Joseph from Temple service with five sanctuary shekels.

A double incident, his recognition by the aged Simeon and the prophetess Anna, has rendered forever memorable this first visit of the Infant King to the Holy Temple. Simeon's recognition of the Little Messiah especially is touchingly beautiful. As the flight of years had swept on, so ardent had grown the old man's faith and hope that this one thing he desired above all others, that ere his eyes were closed in death they might behold his Incarnate Saviour. So when the Holy Family entered the sacred inclosure, with silver for the ransom, and doves for the sacrifice, this good old man also came into the Temple. He was a just and devout man. He was extremely pious and venerable. He lived in Jerusalem, and perchance was the successor of Zacharias, possibly the high-priest and president of the great Jewish Sanhedrim. At least he was an honorable counselor, to whom it had been revealed by the Spirit of Truth that he should not depart this mortal life until he had seen the King of Glory in the flesh. A legend, contained in the Arabic Gospel of the King's Infancy, makes the old man recognize the Sacred Babe as his Saviour, in view of the fact that he saw him shining like a pillar of light in the arms of the Virgin mother, while angels stood around him in silent adoration, like the guards of a king. Simeon, at any rate, was permitted

to embrace the Heavenly Infant in his aged arms with a consciousness of his Messiahship, and in his transport of joy he exclaimed: Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of my people Israel.

The third of these important events was the visit of the wise men to Bethlehem. The Star of the King's nativity had made its appearance in the East. It was seen and recognized by the Magi as the natal star of the world's Redeemer. The transparent atmosphere of that clime revealed the splendors of the heavens by night with a glory unknown to other lands. The grand phenomena of the beautiful stars, presented in that oriental country, soon led to a belief in, and the study of astrology. This superstition resulted ere long in the worship of the heavenly bodies. These astrologers regarded the sun as the king of day, and the moon and stars as rulers of the night. The planets, or wandering stars, were their greatest mysteries. They called them interpreters, and believed they did portend something either fortunate or unfortunate, in all their strange movements and varied aspects. They also held that the position of these interpreters, at a child's birth, determined unalterably its future fate or fortune. Hence to cast "nativities" became one of the most important functions of these Eastern astrologers. The Jewish Rabbis at one time also dabbled in astrology. The calculation of the stars became their chief glory. Though they claimed that no planet ruled Israel, but that her sons themselves were all stars. This science was at

first confined to a priestly caste known as the Magi, or wise men, of the East. But in after years the name lost its wonted prestige, being applied to magicians who practiced a much lower grade of magical arts. With this class of magicians the life and portion of a child did not depend in the least upon its conduct, but hung exclusively upon its natal star.

But the Magi, of whom we speak, were no pretended astrologers, or oriental soothsayers. They were wise men, priestly in office and princely in power. They were Persian scholars. The term Magi, as worn by them, was one of dignity and power. It indicated that they stood at the head of the literati of their age. They came, as representatives of the Gentiles, to offer their allegiance to the new-born King of Glory.

But the star which guided these wise men of the East, in search of Israel's Infant King, was not one of the fixed orbs which guide the pilgrim on the land and the mariner on the deep. Nor could it have been one of the wandering planets which move to and fro upon the starry plains of night, rising and setting, sometimes sooner, and sometimes later than the king of day. Neither was it one of those transient meteors which burn but for a moment, to go out in midnight darkness upon the fields of night. It was a supernatural star which led these Eastern sages from heathen darkness to the Light of the world. It was a star brought into existence by divine power for the express purpose of guiding these princely ambassadors to the place where they could present their royal gifts, in the name of the Gentile world, to the Infant King of Glory.

Like the pillar of fire which guided the hosts of Israel

through the barren deserts of the wilderness, so this luminous star of the King's nativity led these wise men of the East to the cradle of the world's Infant Saviour. When they journeyed, it moved in advance of the sacred caravan. But when they pitched their tents for the night, it gently balanced itself over their camp like a sleeping albatross upon poised pinions in the heavens.

“Beauteous star! once brightly beaming,  
In the far off orient clime;  
Still thy brilliant rays are streaming  
Down the minster-aisles of time.

“Not alone, thou heavenly beacon,  
For the Magi dost thou shine;  
Not alone they heed thy token,  
Hastening to Messiah's shrine.

“We, who dwell in later ages,  
Hail the glorious Saviour's birth;  
We, with oriental sages,  
Bearing gifts, would hasten forth.

“Oh! we love to hear the story,  
How the Lord of life and light  
Left his blissful home in glory,  
To illumine earth's dark night.

“Shine thou on, O starry stranger:  
Tell the aged and the young  
Of the Infant in the Manger,  
And the song the angels sung.

“Shine thou on, O heavenly beacon,  
To remotest regions shine,  
Till all nations thou shalt beckon  
To Messiah's holy shrine.”

But when the Magi caught sight of the lofty towers and glittering domes of Jerusalem, their beautiful guide suddenly disappeared in the depth of the deep blue sky. The God of heaven does not uselessly prolong his miracles when human agency is a sufficient guide: so thought the devout Magi; and hence they entered the Holy City at once, and inquired of those who ought to have known, where they would find the new-born King of the Jews.

These star-led sages reached Jerusalem a few days after the presentation of the Holy Infant. The strange report soon went the rounds in the Holy City. It passed from lip to lip, and from home to home. Certain members of the priestly caste from Persia are in the city, desiring information concerning a New-born King to the Jews, whose natal star, they say, has guided them from their distant homes in the East to the Promised Land. Such an embassy upon such an extraordinary mission was well calculated to throw the entire city into a perfect commotion. The people were wild with enthusiasm, and thrilled with hope. The expectation, even of the Rabbinical schools, was raised to its highest pitch of excitement. Strange catastrophes and unusual phenomena in nature had often been coincident with the greatest events in human history. Why, then, should they doubt the prophecy of Balaam and their own traditions, which prepared them to believe that a great star would make its appearance at the advent of the King-Messiah? They expected their King to come as a Beacon Star, shining amid the sorrows and sins of earth, and casting a halo of divine glory over the gloom and darkness of death.



But while the Baby King, cradled in the Manger at Bethlehem, slept sweetly in its holy innocence,—upon his couch of gold, in the most gorgeous chamber of his royal palace, at Jerusalem, lay a sleepless king, old in years, but older still in crime and misery. He lived in his own palace, in constant dread of the assassin's knife, hating and behated by all around him. He had fought his way to the throne with bloody hands and a crimson heart. He had retained his sceptre at the sacrifice of many human victims. The memories of a murdered wife and slaughtered children reproached him still by day, and haunted him ever by night. Sleep, for weeks, forsook his eyes, and slumber departed from his eyelids. A strange rumor terrified and vexed his jealous soul. It was currently reported that the Legitimate Heir to David's throne had been born in Bethlehem of Judea. He had also been told that angels had celebrated his birth with songs of joy and tidings of gladness. This king was Herod the Great, who had lost every thing worth living for. His peace of mind was gone, his honor lost, and his soul forfeited. Bleeding victims stood around him, in his dreams by night, and the Descendant of Israel's ancient kings was the burden of his heart by day. The fatal predictions kept afloat by the Pharisees, and the divine oracles of the ancient seers were revolved over and over in his mind, until, in his imagination, he saw the Warrior King upon his royal throne, overrunning the world with his victorious conquests. These things, bitter as wormwood, sank deep into the dark and desolate soul of the aged monarch.

On the day that the Magi entered Jerusalem, unfavor-

able reports were brought up hourly from the troubled city to the suspicious and bloodthirsty old king. Night came on, and he turned the strange reports over and over in his mind, trying to divine what they did portend, as he lay tossing upon his royal couch. He was madened with fear, and saddened with remorse. At length he dozed, but started in his sleep, for he caught the gleam of a dagger behind the drapery of his golden couch. He shuddered, for he heard his oppressed subjects rising in revolt along the streets of the city. He arose, for he felt his throne shaking beneath him with the throes of a mighty revolution. He awoke, but found it all a dream. Herod was old, diseased and dying. Few and evil were to be the remaining days of his wretched life. But he was finally resolved that the Infant King of Bethlehem should not embitter his exit out of this, into a still darker world. Willing to extinguish at one stroke all the glories beheld by the prophetic seers of Israel, he decreed that Bethlehem's new-born King should die.

In order to accomplish the wicked purpose of his heart, Herod summoned the authorities of Israel before him at his palace, and demanded of them the prophetic birth-place of their Expected Messiah. They readily responded, Bethlehem of Judea. He now dismissed the Jewish authorities, and privately called the wise men of the East to his palace. He questioned them closely as to the time when the star had made its appearance, and then, under pretense of a similar desire with themselves to worship the Infant Redeemer, he gave them the desired information, and started them to Bethlehem, saying, Go, search diligently for the young child, and



when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also.

The Magi gave the most implicit credence to these false and deceptive words of the Idumean king, and departed with gladness for the city of David. And lo, when they were but a short distance from Jerusalem, their sacred guide reappeared, and went before them until it came and stood over where the Divine Infant lay. They had grown familiar with this lovely star, and hence hailed its return, in this time of need, with exceeding great joy, even as the coming of a faithful friend whom they had mourned as lost. But when these joyful sages reached the city of Bethlehem, and marched to the spot pointed out by the beautiful star which hung in loveliness over the residence of the Holy Family, they entered the house, beheld the Celestial Infant, and offered him their royal gifts in acts of the most devout adoration. They felt that they were well paid for the toils and privations of their long and tedious journey when they saw the Infant Redeemer of the world pilloved upon the maiden bosom of the Virgin mother, and were permitted to fall down and worship him as the earth-born King of Glory.

The divine purpose in directing these wise men to the place of the King's nativity was not simply to gratify their curiosity; nor was it solely for the purpose of honoring them with the exalted privilege of presenting their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh to their Spiritual King. This important event answered many purposes in the divine economy. It aided in defeating the wicked design of a wicked king. It provided means for the support of the Holy Family in their flight to

Egypt. It drew from the great Jewish Sanhedrim, in confirmation of prophecy, the declaration that Bethlehem of Judea was to be the birthplace of the Promised Messiah. It prepared the Gentiles more fully for the reception of the Gospel in after-years. It also taught the world, among many other valuable lessons, that no gifts are too costly to be presented to the Poor Nazarene; and that no men are so wise and great, but they owe the homage and adoration of their hearts to the humble King of Bethlehem.

When Herod found that he was duped by the Magi, who, being warned of God, had failed to report to him their success, he was exceedingly angry. The bold usurper trembled with fear upon his bloody throne. He rested not until he had resolved to slay every male infant in and around Bethlehem under two years of age, lest that one Holy Babe, whom the Eastern sages had saluted as their Infant King, should escape his malignant vengeance. He who had meanly put to death his own children, for fear they would shorten his wicked reign, would now, in a general massacre, willingly and maliciously murder innocent infancy by the wholesale, that he might if possible defeat the purposes of heaven in the death of Zion's Infant King. But not so; the eye which never sleeps nor slumbers, watched over the Babe of Bethlehem for good. Joseph slept: but a celestial light fell upon the face of the sleeper. A heavenly messenger warned the old man in a dream of approaching danger, and bade him take the Virgin and her Royal Son, and flee in the silence and darkness of the night into the land of Egypt.

Herod was doomed to hopeless disappointment. The

steps of his throne were already wet with the blood of his best friends, whom he had murdered to make it secure. But rank jealousy still rankled in his poisoned breast. Age had brought a deeper, deadlier hatred to his malignant soul, and fitted it for more terrible deeds of darkness. He sat amid the splendors of his royal palace in a solitude deeper than death. His anger, like dark clouds on the wings of the wind, spread all over the land until it settled down in its madness upon the peaceful town of Bethlehem, where it gave full vent to its fiery indignation in the shameful slaughter of its helpless innocents. A band of soldiers went forth and executed his heartless decree upon her doomed infants. And a wail of woe went up from the bosom of many a broken-hearted mother, whose sun of joy had been totally eclipsed by this dark cloud of death, which swept like a besom of destruction over their royal city. These innocent little martyrs paid dearly for the honor of having been born with Jesus. But they secured the greater honor of reigning with him in glory.

Herod's treacherous conduct, in this matter, teaches us that those who choose this life as their portion forfeit all peace on earth, and all hope of heaven. Sorrow and sin darken the pathway of their pilgrimage through life, and the night of death soon settles down upon their guilty souls, with no promise of returning day. God's withering curse seared the brain, and his almighty wrath prepared a doom for Herod, which shuddering nature can not contemplate without the most fearful forebodings. He died with a nameless malady—eaten alive by the worms. His doomed soul crossed the Stygian river, crimson with crime, to find no entrance to the Elysium.

Such is the fate of the King's enemies ; and such is the doom of the damned.

The fourth of these noted events was the flight into Egypt. Joseph heeded the admonition of the angel, and the Holy Family started as refugees to the land of bondage. A sad journey awaited both mother and Infant. They must pass over desert wastes, and under a scorching sun, for hundreds of miles. They must also travel, with but few of the comforts of life, in constant dread of being overtaken and murdered by Herod's men of war, or insulted and robbed by strangers in a heathen land. This was a cold reception for the Infant King, who came as a Light to all nations, but was compelled to flee for life, from his own country, into a land the very symbol of darkness and death.

Revelation, yes, even tradition, is silent so far as the details of this long and perilous pilgrimage is concerned. But an unseen guardian must have guided the soft and silent march of the sacred exiles. The Divine Hand must have led them by day, and provided a secure asylum for them by night. For they journeyed through a desert overhung by a fiery sky, and swept by simoons more treacherous than the wondrous waves of the dreaded ocean. The illusive mirage of the desert often threw across their trackless pathway lakes of blue and sparkling waters which the thirsty travelers could never reach, and filled the heavens with strange phenomena which doubtless made the Virgin mother shudder and draw her Darling Babe closer to her heaving bosom when no danger was nigh them. So they passed on for weeks, with the sun pouring his burning beams upon their defenseless heads by day, and the moon shedding her soft, silvery

light over the shadeless and barren wastes by night, until, a thousand trials and dangers passed, the holy fugitives were at last safe in the land of their refuge.

The Holy Family was in Egypt, the nursery of ancient knowledge; but also the devotee of the most shameful idolatry. They gazed with admiration upon her granite obelisks, lofty temples and colossal pyramids. It was a country richer and more populous than the Holy Land: but to them it was wanting in charms; for it was the land of their lonely exile. The great desert was stretched out between them and the native home from which they had virtually been banished.

Inspiration is silent as to the sojourn of the Holy Family in Egypt. Legendary writers, however, give us some incidents of interest in this connection. One of these quaint old legends tells us that they soon went to Heliopolis, a city of considerable importance, where a large colony of Jews lived. As they approached the gates of the city a majestic date tree, worshiped by the Arabs of the place, slowly bent its shady branches as if saluting the young Master of Nature, who was cradled in the arms of his Virgin mother. And, as they passed quietly under the granite archway, the great idol of the city, with all the idols of the neighboring temples, fell prostrate to the ground, creating a wonderful consternation among the people. These romantic legends also represent the Virgin as performing many miraculous cures with the water in which she washed the swaddling clothes of her Heavenly Infant. By this means, they say, she gained great favor with, and received a handsome support from the people whithersoever they chanced to journey. They also represent the Holy Family as



visiting Memphis, seeing Pharaoh and abiding three years in Egypt, where the Baby Jesus, it is said, also did very many miracles, neither recorded in the Gospels of his Infancy, nor yet in the Gospels of his Perfection.

After a stay, variously estimated at from one to three years, in the land of refuge, God sent an angel and called his Son out of Egypt. When Joseph was informed of Herod's death, the Holy Family set out at once for Palestine. Another rather remarkable legend tells us that on their return they had to pass through a certain desert region infested with a band of robbers. Hoping to avoid coming in contact with them, they passed through these parts in the night. But, behold, in their journey, they found two robbers in the road, accompanied by a great number of confederates, who were asleep. The names of the two on watch were Titus and Dumascus. Titus besought his companion to let the Holy Family pass quietly along without being perceived by their comrades in crime. But Dumascus refused; whereupon Titus offered him forty groats, giving his girdle as a pledge, and thereby secured his silence. When Mary saw the kindness shown them by this robber she said: The Lord God will receive thee to his right hand and grant thee pardon of thy sins. Then Jesus said to his mother, When thirty years are expired the Jews will crucify me at Jerusalem, and these two thieves shall be with me upon the cross: Titus upon my right hand and Dumascus upon my left, and from that place Titus shall accompany me to Paradise.

They completed their long and perilous journey, and at last reached the coasts of Judea. It must have been



sweet after their long and lonely exile among heathens to breathe once more the pure air, and gaze again upon the lofty mountains of their own dear, native, Christian land.

But, when they entered Palestine, they evidently intended making Bethlehem their future home. This was perfectly natural. Bethlehem of Judea was the honored city of their distinguished ancestry; and the birthplace of their own Royal Son. Many heroic and hallowed associations clustered around the sacred city of David and David's Greater Son. But circumstances were such as forbade them running the risk of keeping the Legitimate Heir to Israel's throne so near Jerusalem. They were told that the treacherous Archelaus had succeeded his father Herod; and they feared, if he learned of their return, he too would regard their Son Jesus as his Rival for the throne, and put him to death. So they went into Galilee and took up their abode, in the place of their former residence, at Nazareth, that he might be called a Nazarene. And so ended the interesting history of the infantile days of the Infant King of Glory.



## THE CHILDHOOD OF THE KING.

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### CHAPTER III.

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*The child grew and waxed strong in spirit.*—LUKE 2 : 40.

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CHILDHOOD has always been surrounded, necessarily, by a halo of romance peculiar to itself. Biographical literature, both ancient and modern, abound with anecdotes of infancy, incidents of childhood and intimations of boyhood life, as well as with the grand achievements of manhood's riper years.

It is perfectly natural, even praiseworthy, for us to desire to know all we can possibly learn about the early life of Jesus. But, strange to say, the evangelists do not mention a single incident occurring in what we might properly call his childhood years. The well-known surroundings of this period, with some beautiful legendary stories, however, enable us to sound, though with some reserve, yet with much certainty, the sacred depths of this simple but sublime epoch in the life of the Child-King.

The mournful days of their exile were passed, and the Holy Family breathed once more the pure mountain air of their own loved land. Once more they were housed in their humble home, at Nazareth. Of the inner home-life of the Blessed Family, we know but little. It is like the hidden streamlet, or the Holy of

holies, veiled from our vision. Occasionally, however, we may catch a view of the lovely scene, in the study of the after-life of its Central Figure. As coming events cast their shadows before them, so the revealed truths of his public ministry throw some bright rays of light back, upon the otherwise hidden scenes of the early home-life of the Wonderful Nazarene. And the country, its peculiar people and their fixed customs, enable us to look into that oriental home with a good degree of certainty as to many of its sacred usages and simple services.

Oriental life differed materially from the modernized mode of living. Our ideas of progression place society in a whirl of incessant changes ; while their conservatism retains the habits and customs of the past with a superstitious tenacity peculiar to themselves. Orientals cling by nature to the old as sacred and best, rejecting the new as novel and worthless. They resist, to the death, the least innovations upon the customs of their fathers. Hence the mission of Jesus was doubly difficult. To change the formalities of the old dispensation into the spirituality of the new, was bound to meet with the gravest opposition, and prove to be no easy or ordinary task to perform. To supplant the Jewish religion, with its sacred forms, feasts and ceremonies, by the Christian religion, with its simple but significant ordinances, was to be a herculean work. But in after years, as we shall see, our Child-King was fully equal to the mighty task.

The home-life of the Holy Family, in keeping with the age in which they lived, was no doubt both humble and quiet, simple and serene. Its reality must have

differed materially from the fancy and gorgeous pictures of its most elaborate painters. They have unwisely seated the Virgin mother and her Holy Child, in the midst of ease and luxury, upon stately thrones, under canopies of blue and purple, and mantled them with robes of richest colors, embroidered with gold and clasped with priceless gems. It is true, if the Child-King had dwelt in the most gorgeous palace ever built by human hands, this would have been a wonderful concealment of his heavenly glory. Or, if he had received nothing but the royal gifts and most devout homage of all nations, with every language and tongue burdened with his praise, still it would have been infinite condescension upon his part. But how much more significant and humiliating was his wonderful condescension when he passed by the stately palace of kings, and the marble mansions of the rich, to dwell, unhonored and unknown by the world, in that humble and obscure home at Nazareth! though after all it was the holiest and happiest home on earth. This Virgin-born Child, who came to brighten all human homes, and beautify all the paths of human life, with his own transcendent life and triumphant death, knew full well that the hovels of the poor were not necessarily the abodes of wretchedness, or the mansions of millionaires the habitations of happiness. He knew that princely homes were often burdened with the sighs and groans of wounded hearts; while the huts of poverty and penury were as frequently filled with the songs of joy and shouts of gladness.

This Child-King's childhood days must have been very happy days. Innocence is a cause, with happiness

as one of its most legitimate effects. How fragrant, then, must have been the happiest years of the Saviour's life, even those sinless days of his innocent childhood! The presence of this Wonderful Child must have made the humble home of the Village Carpenter the happiest of all homes. The gentle and sanctifying influence of one loving, consecrated heart is sufficient to breathe the blessings of peace upon any unholy family circle. No shameful discord can long resist its harmonizing power. No vulgar tyranny can long withstand its beneficent sorcery. No profane language can long linger around the sacred precincts of its holy altar. But Joseph's was no ordinary home. With a just and devout father to guide, a loving and devoted mother to hallow, and the most interesting and innocent of all sons to illuminate it with the very light of heaven, it could but have been a model home, where peace, purity and piety offered rare inducements to angel visitants to stay their wavering wings awhile on earth.

A beautiful picture of the unity, love and harmony of this model home is seen in a reference to it contained in the Apocryphal History of Joseph the Carpenter, in which Jesus himself is the Speaker. After stating that Joseph had four elder sons and several daughters by a former wife, of whom Justus, Simon, Esther and Thomas had married and gone to their homes, Jesus adds: But Judas and James the Less and the Virgin, my mother, remained in the house of Joseph. I also continued along with them, not otherwise than if I had been one of his own sons. I passed all my time without fault. I called Mary my mother, and Joseph father, and in all they said I was obedient to them. Nor did I



ever resist, provoke their anger, or return any harsh word or answer to them. On the contrary, I cherished them with immense love, as the apple of mine eye. Blessed home! Wonderful Child! Would that all homes could be modeled after this pattern, and all children be induced to imitate this royal example of filial obedience and love.

Joseph and Mary also loved the Royal Child devotedly. This passionate love of these devoted parents for their Remarkable Offspring was characteristic of the nation to which they belonged. The Child Jesus was, no doubt, the center of attraction around which the life and love of that consecrated household constantly clustered. They not only loved, but also adored the Holy Child. For while he was their Beloved Child, they also recognized him as the Offspring of Heaven. Hence, while there was parental affection both pure and deep in their hearts, there was also holy adoration, both sacred and devout, in their souls for the Celestial Child. It was perfectly natural that Mary should love him most of all, and more than all. He was her only Child, and therefore the sum of her maternal solicitude and happiness, and the chief source of her earthly joys, as well as the only hope of her heavenly bliss. Mary united with a mother's love a maiden's purity, and consequently loved her Son, perchance, as no other mother ever loved her child. No wonder! Mary was a sacred Virgin, called of God to nourish with her own milk, and cradle in her maiden arms the precious Little King of heaven.

Jesus, in the truest sense of the word, was a child. He must, therefore, have looked and acted in many re-



spects much like other children would under similar circumstances. He, no doubt, played around the workbench, gathering chips and blocks for toys, when Joseph was working at his trade. He ran playfully along before his mother as she carried her earthen pitcher to and from the fountain for water. He busied his little hands, with childish joy, assisting his parents in their daily tasks. And he rejoiced, with childish fervor, when his red caftan, bright tunic and many-colored sash assured him of another pleasant visit with his parents to the village synagogue.

The tutelage of her Holy Child was one of the Virgin's chief delights. His first lessons were given by her in the sanctuary of their own sacred home. The richest treasures of the mother's mind and heart were poured daily into the growing intellect and opening affections of her Beloved Son. And his rapidly developing powers gave back in his childhood life all that was grand and good in these maternal lessons of love. Just as the fragrant flower sends forth the sweet odors which fall upon it in the hours of sunshine and cultivated care, so the Appreciative Son returned with deepest gratitude all of the tender solicitude of his devoted mother. The maternal toils, privations, and sacrifices of the true mother always entitle her to the respect, confidence, and love of the children for whom she lives and labors. And they are unworthy sons and daughters who, unmindful of these sacred obligations, fail to honor and revere her who gave them birth and watched, in tears and tenderness, over their childhood life.

Under the wise counsel of Joseph, the Young King also learned many of the richest and most profound lessons

of his childhood days. God made no mistake in selecting a counselor for his Incarnate Son. Joseph was not a profound scholar, but he had a rich and ripe experience in the divine life, which qualified him preëminently for the soul-culture and heart-development of the Young Nazarene. The Little Fellow was deprived of the advantages of a regular literary education, but his supernatural abilities compensated amply for any deficiency in his secular training. And there were, no doubt, many sweet spirits, among the favored associates of his parents, who shed the light of their holier natures and higher lives upon the family gatherings at Nazareth, none of which would be lost upon this most Remarkable Child.

Little Jesus was not endowed with infinite wisdom, nor clothed with absolute power during his sweet and holy childhood life. He experienced in his growth and development all the limitations to which the flesh is heir, with all the inconveniences of human nature in its sinless state. The Child grew and waxed strong in spirit. He grew as other children do, save his was a more rapid growth—a growth of sinless beauty—a perfect and harmonious development of his physical, mental, and moral natures. The faculties of his mind developed so rapidly that, ere his youthful days had flown, he had attained to the perfection of human knowledge, and was reaching out after the consummation of heavenly wisdom. Though there were some things which Jesus, in his human capacity, never knew, for the simple fact that it was not necessary, or best that he should know them, and hence the Father did not reveal them to him while in the flesh. But, for a Child, he was certainly a most eager

and gifted Learner. His childish enthusiasm and unparalleled progress must have kindled in the hearts of his honored instructors the greatest admiration for the wise Little King. His noble and manly bearing could but have won the esteem and love of all whose exalted privilege it was to be intimately associated with him, even in his childhood life.

The King's character, or moral nature, began also to develop itself when he was quite young. The Child waxed strong in spirit. In other words, he increased wonderfully in his conception of moral truth, and grew strong, and still stronger, in the fixedness of his purpose to meet all the obligations of the moral law in perfecting a representative character for the fallen race. In this model character we find purity without a stain. His little feet remained entire strangers to the paths of sin and folly, while his young heart was growing more and more familiar with the duties, as well as with the woes and sorrows, of humanity. In his life we have a sun without a spot. The rising of this Spotless Sun was the death warrant of the Mosaic Economy. It was the withdrawing of the sable curtains of a long ebon night, and the ushering in of a brighter and better day, when unfettered and redeemed humanity worshiped the Father of all in spirit and in truth. His life was a perfect exhibition of love. His young soul was an entire stranger to selfishness. Love and humility were among the principal characteristics of his childhood life. Hatred and arrogance were alike alien to his royal character. His demeanor, from sweet infancy to generous manhood, partook largely of the meekness and lowliness which characterized his public

career in the world. He who came to heal the sorrow and take away the sin of the world, was himself, even in childhood, the world's great Moral Exemplar.

Early piety also characterized the childhood life of the Growing King. He was truly and devotedly pious. Good thoughts were perfectly at home in his pure and innocent little heart. The way of duty, when made plain, was easily chosen by his loving and obedient soul. He walked in the ways of righteousness, even during the first feeble steps of his innocent life. Ministering spirits supported the weakness of the flesh, and the Pious Child of earth soon ran with alacrity and delight in the ways of God. The tender mind of the Young King willingly received the truth, but positively rejected the error. His little heart eagerly embraced the good, but cautiously turned away from the evil. His young soul warmed up under the genial rays of virtue, but shunned, as it would the deadly upas, the dark shades of vice. He was truly and purely spiritual in his devotions from his youth up. In him was condensed all that is good, exalted, and spiritual in human nature. He alone developed heaven's ideal of humanity, and became the fit Representative and Guide of his ruined race. Thus, in childhood's tender years, the Youthful King presented the world with a model character, not only preëminent in its moral grandeur, but also without a parallel in its spiritual excellency.

The King's pathway through life was often rough, but strewn with many blessings: his afflictions were sometimes sore, but always mingled with infinite compassion; and his death was the most shameful and ignominious, but crowned at last with eternal glories.

The Little King was the humble Child of Heaven. He manifested no artificial pride or regal haughtiness in his conduct, not even through the weaker years of his childhood life. He was ever courteous and obliging to all around him. Hence he grew in their favor and seated himself deeply in their affections. He soon learned that pride and impudence were inseparable companions; that haughtiness and cruelty marched hand in hand; while humility and love always journeyed together, beautifying and adorning the same noble character through life. This royal example of the Child-King points all children early to the King's Highway of Holiness, which leads up through the dark trials, troubles, and tribulations of earth to the ineffable joys, blessedness, and glories of heaven.

With this remarkable life before us we should learn, early and always in our thoughts, to link with the attainments, the privileges of humanity; with the privations, the enjoyments of earth; with the duties, the promises of religion; with the trials, the supports of life, and, above all, should we link with the sins of men the Saviour of Sinners.

It is the part of wisdom in children to view life in its true light, and then, like the Child Jesus, fulfill, with wonted fidelity, all its sacred obligations. To do this we must see to it that our little hearts are right before God; and the sooner we get them right the better it will be for us; for then our lives will much more easily harmonize with his divine will.

But, children, this Child-King lived and finally died for us. We are, therefore, under special obligations to him, and ought at least to live for Jesus. Think just



one moment: For what, or for whom are you living? Some people live only for pleasure, but lay up for themselves sorrow and deepest regret. Some live for riches alone, but are exceedingly poor at death. Some live for honor and renown, but die "unknown, unhonored, and unsung." Others live exclusively for safety. They gather around them a thousand earthly shields, but finally lie down exposed to the dangers of an endless death. All such persons work hardest for poorest pay; they spend most, and receive least in return; they live to no purpose, and die without any hope in death. For the vain delusions of time they forfeit the lasting happiness of eternity; for the transient gratifications of earth they surrender the infinite fullness of heaven. But, children, there are those in the world who live for Christ. They manifest their gratitude to him in rearing monuments, sacred to his memory, in their life's conduct. They lose sight of the world in their devotion to the Cross of Christ. Their feet are walking the earth, but their hopes are anchored in heaven. Their treasures and their hearts are there. They have a title to an inheritance worth infinitely more than all the treasures, riches and honors of earth. Such persons live for a noble purpose, and will die in the triumphs of a living faith in Jesus. Children, imitating this Child-King in your lives, you may so live, so die, and finally reign as kings and priests with him forever in the Paradise of God.



## THE BOYHOOD OF THE KING.

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### CHAPTER IV.

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*Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.*—LUKE 2: 52

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THE boyhood life of Jesus is of special and peculiar interest to the world. But this portion of his history is almost barren of recorded facts, and must, therefore, be largely conjectural. Inspiration records but one single event occurring in this period of his life, and that just at its close. And the gaps in the Apocryphal writings, covering his boyhood days, are very numerous, and some of them exceedingly large. It reminds one of the majestic ruins of some ancient city of the desert, with here and there a gigantic column standing as firm as the everlasting hills, while all around its departed glory lie the drifting sands of a bleak and sterile waste.

In many respects the Young Galilean must have been much like other boys of his day and age. He possessed the buoyant spirit of boyhood life. He loved the society of his fellows. He enjoyed the innocent amusements and harmless sports, as well as the necessary recreations, of boyhood days. He had a home congenial to these natural inclinations. Nazareth was the flower of Palestine. Of all the Galilean towns it is said to have been the most lovely for situation, and most to be

desired as a retired and attractive home. It was beautiful and romantic beyond description. It was regarded in spring-time as a princely paradise, because of its great number and variety of beautiful flowers. Its picturesque streets were terraces on the hill slopes, which overlooked the fertile plains and flowery vales beneath. It was a mountain village, with pure air and sunshine free. Then, it was a fit and fortunate home for the innocent Young Nazarene. The Father made no mistake in the orderings of providence which sent his Son to this quiet and beautiful little city, to be reared up among its lofty mountains and liberty-loving populace. Here the Boy King, with his jovial companions, climbed the towering hills, and rambled through the lovely valleys, as boys are naturally wont to do in their hours of pastime and recreation. Here Jesus spent most of the years of his earthly pilgrimage. Here the happy days of his youthful life flitted away, like the golden moments of a pleasant dream. Among these hills, in these valleys, and on these streets, he spent the romantic years of his boyhood life. In his humble though happy home at Nazareth, drinking in the purity and freedom of its mountain air, this true-hearted and generous Boy of Heaven, quick in intellect, vivid in imagination, and gifted in all the noble characteristics of youthful life, developed into the perfect manhood of a Wonderful Nazarene, in whom there could be found no guile. Then if there be a spot on earth to which the Christian pilgrim may justly turn as the place which fitly symbolizes innocence, purity, and happiness, it is, of all others, the sacred home of the Holy Family in Nazareth of Galilee.

Jesus made the very best of his boyhood hours. He gave none of those precious moments to idleness. A large proportion of this time was given to his intellectual and moral development. A greater part of this period of his life was doubtless spent in a school of some character. For, strange as it may seem to us, we must remember that the Boy Jesus passed through all the stages, and was subject to all the necessities of human life. He was purely a human being, Evil alone had no seed, and consequently no growth in the spotless Young King. The innocence of infancy was never lost by him. He sanctified all the periods of human life through which he passed. He lived without sin, in the perfect development of all the Christian graces which he afterwards inculcated, in so far as they effected a sinless life. He was humanity's Ideal from the cradle to the cross. His human life was a perfect reflex of the divine character. His heart was the most sacred temple of the Holy Ghost, which was given him without measure. His soul was a divine mirror which gave back to earth and heaven all of their imparted grace, and its own innate glory. He saw things just as they were, and harmonized his grand and eventful life, even during its earlier stages, with all the varied scenes and peculiar surroundings through which he was called to pass. He made no mistake through all the sacred but perilous journey of life. He continued increasing all the time in wisdom as he grew in stature, and waxed stronger in spirit as he augmented in favor, both with his heavenly Father and his fellow-man.

The maiden mother continued to exert considerable influence in the more rapid development of the wonder-

ful character of her Sinless Son. But, after the many sacred lessons given him by the Virgin and the more advanced instruction of Joseph, the little Boy King was carried to the Jewish synagogue for the still higher training of the learned Rabbis. For the education of poor Jewish boys at that time was confined almost exclusively to moral and religious instruction. During this period of his life, the Rabbis were in the height of their ecclesiastical glory. They had been driven from the political arena by Herod the Great, and hence had turned their attention chiefly to the discussion of religious questions. The Boy Jesus availed himself of every opportunity thus presented him for the study of the Holy Scriptures. He had soon mastered thousands of the legal definitions and decisions comprised in the elaborate religious jurisprudence of his day. So that at twelve years of age he was more than an equal for the Rabbinical schools at Jerusalem. Both his questions and his answers astonished beyond measure even the learned doctors of the law. He had not taken his seat in the synagogue at Nazareth Sabbath after Sabbath in vain. Neither had the Young Nazarene studied the Scriptures privately, week after week, for naught. He had stored away for future use, as every boy should, all the valuable lessons learned in God's holy sanctuary, or culled from his Revealed Will, until his whole existence, at this age, was purely and spiritually religious.

The Boy King also studied nature. His happy allusions to, and striking illustrations from natural things, in some of the richest lessons of his after-life, show most conclusively that he had been a close and successful student of every thing around him. But whatever he

may have gathered from natural and human sources, he was also the Pupil of Heaven. He opened his little heart daily, and received wisdom from God, who giveth to all liberally and upbraideth none. His richest lessons came directly from the Father, who willingly bestowed wisdom without measure upon his Divine Son, whose will was completely lost in his own.

The Young Galilean had a mind sufficiently comprehensive to grasp intuitively the sequences of coming events. He did not need to be brought up at the feet of a Gamaliel. Neither was it necessary for some learned Rabbi to initiate him into the mysteries of the arts and sciences of his day. He had already learned many of the grandest lessons both of science and theology directly from nature and Revelation. And he was also in constant communication with heaven. Hence he was soon the Master of Science, and most profoundly versed in sacred lore. In him were afterwards hidden all the resources of knowledge, and all the treasures of wisdom. The grand truths which he inculcated, during his public ministry, prove most conclusively that he did not receive his education solely from man. These great truths emanated from a mind so vast and comprehensive, and a soul so pure and lofty, that the former could never have been perverted, neither the latter contaminated, by all the scholastic disputations, magical deceptions and traditional legends of the misguided age in which he lived. For it must be admitted that all the worldly wisdom of that period, though exhausted on one individual, could never have produced such a profound moral instructor as even the Boy Jesus was at twelve years old.



The Young King had a meek and meditative soul, vast in its youthful expansions, and infinite in its continued developments. He also had a lofty soul which royalty could not dazzle; an humble soul which honors could not trouble; a pure soul which knew no vexation, and a noble soul which walked calmly alike through the joys, and sorrows of life. Being perfectly conscious of his own superiority, he journeyed on through this world with his ears ever open to that inward monitor whose whisperings always admonish us to flee the wrong and pursue the right. He recognized in this monitor, the sacred voice of his own soul speaking to the outer man in accents both audible and divine. Our souls are the citadels of our strength. There is light for us in the path trod by the Saviour. If we journey in that light, we are saved; but if we miss that path, we are lost. To shield ourselves successfully from the great adversary of souls, like the Boy King, we must guard well all its sacred avenues. For, the citadel once taken, the forces must all soon surrender. The soul once captured, and all is lost. Give thy soul to God, that it may be strongly fortified against the powers of darkness.

In his boyhood days, Jesus was simply learning how to live that he might afterward, both by precept and example, teach others the same great lesson. The real victories of life are gained in our apprenticeship at learning how to live. The master struggle for conquest is right along on this line. There is no failure if we have once learned this grand lesson. We can not, therefore, learn it too soon or at too great a sacrifice. Success and failure, both here and hereafter, are but the necessary consequences of right and wrong living. Suc-



cess accompanies right living just as certainly as effect follows its legitimate cause. And failure, sooner or later, is inevitable whenever a wrong principle controls our life-actions. What is right living? It is living for God, through Christ, who is our life. For, when we live right, our lives are hid with Christ in God. The Boy Jesus lived right. His manners were always sweet and attractive. His demeanor was ever generous and captivating. He loved every body, and the good all loved, and honored the pure and precious Boy of Nazareth. He was growing large, but he still remained subject to the will and wishes of his parents. He never forsook the counsel of his God. The benedictions of the former ever rested upon his sacred head. And he walked, at all times, conscious of the divine presence of the latter. The Father's grace ever distilled gently, and softly upon the Young Son, like the falling dew or the morning light.

The Boy King not only taught us how to live; he also taught us how to love and labor. Just as his was the only perfect life, so his was also the only perfect love and labor the world has ever known since the fall of man. His love went far beyond that of his fellows. It was absolutely perfect in character, and infinitely perfect in degree. He loved with purest and deepest devotion those whose thoughts, purposes and hopes were kindred to his own. But he also loved with chords stronger than death his own inveterate and avowed enemies. So he loved more than his own life all sinners—even a world of fallen, depraved humanity. But the Boy Jesus was also a Worker. He both sanctioned and sanctified manual labor, the humble, but only honorable

means of support for a vast majority of our race. The King was a Carpenter. He learned this humble trade, and made it the honorable means of his support for years. In this example he showed what a noble, and manly thing it is to work, even where idleness is the stamp of aristocracy. He recognized in labor the girdle of manliness and the salt of life. He saw that it was the saviour of the body from effeminacy, and of the soul from pollution and crime. His labors through life were incessant and most arduous. And they had reference mainly, if not solely, to the good of those for whom he toiled. No mercenary motives ever controlled his actions for a moment. He was perfectly content to labor for others, while he had not where to lay his own sacred, and weary head. The present and future happiness of mankind were the grand mainsprings which impelled him forward, in all the labors and sacrifices of his ever busy and most eventful life.

There is a unique charm, in the vein of self-denial, which ran through the entire life of Jesus. His was the only absolutely unselfish life ever lived on earth. And it seems most unnatural to withhold the homage, and adoration of our hearts from so worthy a Personage. Our King lived, a man among men, sharing alike the joys and sorrows of humanity, and dignifying the humblest avocations, and professions of life in his own humble occupation. He made every thing subservient to religion; and thus inaugurated a system of benevolence which dethrones selfish devotion to our own personal interests, and crowns our lives with loving service and self-sacrificing devotion for the good of others. The natural currents of his benevolence, which flowed so

freely during his ministry of mercy, broadened and deepened at his sacrificial death into an overflowing sea of charity toward sinning, and suffering humanity. Let us ever imitate his noble example and live, love and labor until the Master says: It is enough; well done, thou good and faithful servant.

Jesus was twelve years old. This was a critical age for a Jewish boy. At this period of life, if not sooner, he was obliged to learn a trade upon which he could depend for his future support in case of an emergency. He was also emancipated, in part, from parental authority. At this age he became a subject of the law. He was no longer counted among the "little folks;" but was now recognized as belonging to the "grown up" class. He was now treated more like a man than a boy. This age was a decisive epoch in his literary pursuits: it qualified him for the battle-field; and also authorized him to enter the marriage relation. Such were the changes and conditions to which the Young King was subject at this period of life.

The parents of Jesus went annually to Jerusalem, to attend the feast of the Passover. The law did not require the presence of the women at their three great Jewish festivals—the Passover, Pentecost and the Feast of Tabernacles. But, the pious devotion of many mothers in Israel forced them to join their husbands in, at least, some of these sacred pilgrimages to the Holy City. Jesus was now ready to assume the responsibilities of the law in his own person. So he accompanied his parents on this occasion, perhaps for the first time, to the great feast of the Passover. This journey, through a country and to a city teeming with such sacred wonders,

and associated with so many marvelous events in the history of his peculiar people, must have exerted a powerful influence upon the Devoted Boy. They journeyed on with the multitudes for several days. When they caught sight, at last, of the lofty towers of Jerusalem, they saw that the wings of the Roman Eagle were still overshadowing her past grandeur, and concealing her wonted glory. But, towering far above her massive walls, with its gilded roofs and marble colonnades, were seen, glittering in the sunlight of heaven, the glories of that Holy Temple toward which the lonely exiles of Israel from all lands turned, in their prayers, with such deep and fervid devotion.

The Boy King was at last in full view of the great city of which his royal father David sang so touchingly, and for which the lonely captives of Babylon yearned, with such tender emotion, as they sat weary by the waters, and removed their hanging harps from the weeping willows to wail that mournful dirge in memory of her never-to-be-forgotten privileges. Knowing so well its history, and seeing so clearly its coming doom, the Boy Saviour must have looked with reverential but sad emotions upon the Holy City. They entered the metropolis, and mingled with its overflowing multitudes.

The pilgrims, at this Passover, from every part of the country, might have been numbered by thousands. The city could not accommodate the vast crowds. They reared for themselves temporary booths, which furnished sufficient shelter for their temporary wants. This feast lasted a week, and was an occasion of much happiness, and deep religious emotion to many in Israel.

The great Passover ended. The immense caravans started back on their homeward journeys. Music and mirth enlivened their returning pilgrimages. Some say the men, women and children formed three separate divisions of each moving caravan, during the hours of travel. At any rate, it was a very easy matter, in that great sea of humanity, to lose sight, for a time, of an interesting boy just budding into manhood. At night-fall of the first day's journey, the parents of the Young King learned that their Sacred Son was missing from the band of returning pilgrims. They were much perplexed, and retraced their steps with haste to Jerusalem, in search of their Lost Boy. After three days of anxious inquiry and diligent effort, to their great surprise, they found the Young Rabbi seated in the Holy Temple, among the learned doctors of the law, who were both charmed and confounded at the depth of his profound questions, and the accuracy of his wonderful answers. The sacred record informs us, that all who heard him were astonished at his understanding. But the Gospel of his Infancy, enlarging on this brief story, adds so much to its interest, without displaying any want of harmony with the divine record, or fidelity to the sacred truth, that we feel disposed to give the account here in full.

When Jesus was twelve years old, Joseph and Mary brought him to Jerusalem to the feast, and when the feast was over they returned. But the Lord Jesus continued behind, in the Temple, among the doctors, elders and learned men of Israel, to whom he proposed several questions of learning, and also gave them answers; for he said to them, Whose son is the Messiah? They



answered, The son of David. Why then, said he, does he in the Spirit call him Lord? when he saith, The Lord said to my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, till I have made thine enemies thy footstool.

Then a certain principal Rabbi asked him, Hast thou read books? Jesus answered, he had read both books, and the things contained in books. And he explained to them the books of the law, and precepts, and statutes; and the mysteries which are contained in the books of the prophets; things which the mind of no creature could reach. Then said that Rabbi, I never yet have seen or heard of such knowledge! What do you think that boy will be?

When a certain astronomer, who was present, asked the Lord Jesus, if he had studied astronomy, Jesus replied, and told him the number of the spheres and heavenly bodies, as also their triangular, square and sextile aspect; their progressive and retrograde motion; their size and several prognostications; and other things which the reason of man had never discovered.

There was also among them a philosopher, well skilled in physic and natural philosophy, who asked the Lord Jesus if he had studied physic. He replied, and explained to him physics and metaphysics; also those things which were above and below the power of nature; the powers also of the body, its humors and their effects. Also the number of its members, bones, veins, arteries, and nerves; the several constitutions of body, hot and dry, cold and moist, and the tendencies of them; how the soul operated upon the body; what its various sensations and faculties were; the faculty of speaking, anger, desire; and, lastly, the manner of its composition



and dissolution, and other things which the understanding of no creature had ever reached. Then that philosopher arose, and worshiped the Lord Jesus, saying, O Lord Jesus, from henceforth I will be thy disciple and servant.

But while they were discoursing on these and such like things, his mother Mary came in, having been three days walking about with Joseph, seeking for him. And when they saw him sitting among the doctors, and in his turn proposing questions to them, and giving answers, she said to him: My Son, why hast thou done thus by us? Behold, I and thy father have been at much pains seeking thee. He replied: Why did ye seek me? Did ye not know that I ought to be employed in my Father's house? But they understood not the words which he said to them. Then the doctors asked Mary if he was her son; and when she said he was, they said: O happy Mary, who hast borne such a son! Then he returned with them to Nazareth, and obeyed them in all things. And his mother kept all these things in her mind; and the Lord Jesus grew in stature and wisdom, and in favor with God and man.

It was perfectly natural that this learned galaxy of divines should have been charmed, and confounded at the presence of this noble-hearted boy as he stood before them, in all the beauty and simplicity of his boyhood life, discoursing so profoundly about divine things. Especially was this true, when they remembered that he had not been educated in the Rabbinical schools at Jerusalem. For, like the enemies of Jesus in after-years, they often made the very common mistake of substituting erudition for learning, or knowledge for

wisdom. They were slow to comprehend this important fact, that true learning, or wisdom of the purest and deepest mold, was independent of, and infinitely above all that constituted the knowledge or erudition of their Rabbinical schools. Though perfectly conscious of his divinity, having just emitted from his royal majesty so many rays of his kingly glory, with all the manliness and humility of a dutiful son, the Young King returned with his earthly parents to Nazareth of Galilee, and was still obedient to them in all the requirements which they made at his hands.

We are told that from this time Jesus gave himself to the study of the law, till he arrived at the end of his thirtieth year. About eighteen years then passed away with no record of his words of wisdom, or deeds of noble daring. Not a footprint is left on the sands of time to mark definitely any of his mysterious journeyings. We only know, that during this long period of his life, it was his custom to teach in the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and that by some means he captivated the hearts of the people, and continued to increase in wisdom and stature, as he grew in favor with God and man. During this voiceless period the Silent Nazarene must have astonished the multitudes occasionally with the depth of his constantly increasing wisdom. Their hearts, no doubt, often melted under the gentle influence of his sweet spirit of love. And at times he doubtless charmed his large audiences with his youthful eloquence. For his was an eloquence of his own. It was peculiar to himself. It differed alike from the majestic diction of the ancient prophets and the emphatic exaggerations of the proud Rabbins of his day. It was simple, yet

sublime. It was eloquence, the most humble in its pretensions, and yet the grandest in its loftier flights.

During these solitary vigils of the Young Galilean, he became more and more conversant with the loftiest conceptions of Israel's sacred seers, who had been so richly endowed through the channel of divine inspiration. The learned and eloquent Young Nazarene became eminently qualified to instruct, and continued to teach the people in the synagogue at Nazareth. Those who listened to his soul-stirring words were among the most highly favored auditors ever assembled in this world. For there was grandeur and harmony in the sublime truths he uttered. There was life in the thought, music in the voice and melody in the soul of the Young Orator. Like the gentle breezes which swept the Æolian harp of the royal prophet, the harmonious breathings of a more sublime inspiration, kissed the melodious chords of a sweeter harp struck by the fingers of his Royal Son. The Gifted Speaker spoke with such winning grace and matchless power that his hearers were often astonished, but gladly listened to his tender accents of love and wonderful words of life.

The Young King spoke as one having innate authority. He made no appeal to others to substantiate his statements; for his highest authority rested in the obvious truthfulness of his own words. If he occasionally referred to the Jewish Scriptures, it was simply to show how perfectly his teachings harmonized with the voice of inspiration. This divine authority touched all hearts; silenced all lips, and forced even his opponents to acknowledge that he had spoken all things well. These sacred truths had never before been expressed with such childlike

simplicity and infinite wisdom. Religion had never before been brought, with such authority, so near the every-day life of the world. The Wise Nazarene looked right down into the hearts, and expressed the ways and wants of his audiences as none had ever done before. His matchless voice sank into the very depth of their souls, and they could but acknowledge the authority of its awful and resistless power. He spake as one having divine authority. Jesus above all others possessed that divine art and holy unction which should ever characterize the Gospel ministry. These qualifications, so necessary to success in the ministry, are not innate, but heaven-derived. The Father bestowed them upon his Immaculate Son in all their fullness and power, because he asked for them in the simplicity of his implicit faith, and with a heart always open for their reception. Let the ministry imitate his noble example, and they will soon be able to manifest his power, and show forth his glory in the proclamation of his Gospel of Grace to the ends of the earth.

We love to contemplate the private life of the Silent King during these voiceless years of his sinless solitude. Here we find an exhaustless fountain of sacred lore. The noble Young Nazarene knew nothing of the vile passions which corrupt the hearts, or the personal sins which agitate the souls of young men, in all the avocations and callings of life. His was a heart full of grace, a soul replete with grandeur, and a destiny to be crowned with infinite glory. Never have men seen so many perfections blended in any other character. Never will the world witness such grace and grandeur united in a mere mortal man. Jesus was the Masterpiece of Humanity, the Wonder of Ages, the Ideal of Heaven.

The silent hours of this secluded, and solitary life of the Young King are full of precious lessons, overflowing with consolation and encouragement to the apparently insignificant and obscure of earth. These lessons teach us that prominent action, public service and brilliant success are not essentials to true and noble living. They also teach us that the lot of those who spend their years in private life, unhonored and unsung in the public arena, is the safest and happiest lot after all.

All of these silent and sinless years of Jesus were spent in toil, submission and obscurity ; in contentment, humility and prayer, that he might prepare himself well for life's great mission, and leave an example worthy of imitation to all ages. It was during these private years, in the midst of evil associations and unhallowed surroundings, that the Spotless Nazarene developed that perfect representative character for the world. It was at this time, and under these circumstances that he kept the law perfectly, and thus taught by example what he afterwards taught by precept—how to live a life wholly consecrated to the service of God. Jesus, in his private life, was the Moral Hero of the world. Moral excellency always adorned his matchless character. And his laws,—personal, relative and religious,—were all recommended by his own example, before they were enforced by his sovereign authority. So ended the boyhood days and private life of the King of Glory.



## THE NATURE OF THE KING.

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### CHAPTER V.

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*Verily he took not on him the nature of angels.*—HEB. 2: 16.

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THE nature of the King of Glory is one of the most profound mysteries connected with his manifestation in the flesh. This mystery consists in the harmonious union of the human and divine elements in one and the same Remarkable Personage. Inspiration represents Jesus Christ as possessing both a human, and a divine nature—as being both God and man. If we fail fully to comprehend this great mystery, that is no reason for rejecting the revealed fact, any more than a failure to fathom the relations of a united soul and body, would justify us in denying this universally admitted truth. Jesus Christ was a Compound Being, with a two-fold nature. He was most emphatically our God-man. He was Divinity, revealed to us in humanity. To prove these important truths, and in so doing to set the King of Glory before our readers, in the depth of his humiliation, and the height of his exaltation, will be our purpose in the present chapter.

The two-fold nature of the King is seen clearly in the four-fold Gospels of the Evangelists. They wrote their respective biographies of the Saviour from four different stand-points. And in this God-man of these Gospels



we find the most compassionate and perfect manhood mysteriously united with the Incarnate and Divine Sonship. Jesus, viewed from the stand-point of his four-fold Gospel, is a person of the most profound interest to all lovers of sacred history. The enemies of these Gospels have represented their teachings as a mass of myths, legends and ideal creations, unworthy the life and lessons of the real or actual Jesus. This, however, is but the subterfuge of ignorance and infidelity, and a virtual acknowledgment of their inability to account for their miraculous narratives and lofty moral tone, on any other hypothesis than that of their inspiration. For they know that the sacred stories of these Gospels are no floating mass of visionary legends, or cunningly devised fables, but the embodiment of truths the most wonderful and sublime. They must acknowledge that these four Gospels portray the same Great Character from different points of view. The unity of this Character, as seen from these different stand-points, is sufficient proof to disclose forever the odious fallacy, which gives to this grandest of all characters a mere ideal creation. The fact is, and his enemies all realize it, the portraiture given us by these four Evangelists was copied from the life, and is the correct delineature of an Individual, who really existed in the divine, but humanized, Personage of Jesus Christ, the God-man.

These four Gospels are mere memoirs of the Saviour's public ministry, presenting to the world the great fundamental principles of Christianity. Yet, each Gospel, viewed from its proper stand-point, is a faithful record of his life, and bears on its own face certain positive proofs of its authenticity and inspiration. Who would

question for a moment the authenticity, and truthfulness of a Life of Washington, simply because it chanced to be the result of the combined efforts of four different biographers, viewing the Father of our country, in his eventful life, from as many different stand-points? Let us glance for a moment at such a Biography of this truly great and good man, and see if we can find aught in it to condemn or disparage. The first has written from a historical stand-point, giving the incidents of his life in regular detailed order, with no special reference to their character or importance. The second has written from a moral stand-point, noticing only such events as bring out the more striking moral lessons of his grand and influential life. The third has written from a military stand-point, detailing most minutely all of the adventures of his soldier-life with their purity of purpose and deeds of heroic, and noble daring. But the fourth, viewing him in the glory of his statesmanship, has written from this exalted stand-point, dwelling almost exclusively upon the scenes, and surroundings of that period of his life out of which shines the true nobility and grandeur of his lofty soul. They all differ materially, and yet they all agree harmoniously. Just so with the Synoptic Gospels of Jesus Christ. They are but so many Biographies of the Saviour's life written from as many stand-points, and hence differing materially in their general make-up, but agreeing most perfectly in the concord of their unity. Let us look for a moment at these Biographies also, and see if there be any grounds for condemning and rejecting their harmonious presentation of truths relative to the life and teachings of the King of Glory.

The first of these Gospels was written by Matthew, a Jew to the Jews, and hence from a Jewish stand-point. He was one of the twelve apostles, and consequently an eye-witness to much that he recorded. He gives them the genealogy of Jesus back through the lineage of King David to the Father of the Jewish race, and there he stops. That answers his purpose. He presented him to the Jews as the Lion of the tribe of Judah. His object was to influence them to accept him as their Promised Messiah. Hence he showed them how Jesus loved his enemies ; how he sent the apostles first to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, and then gave them the parables of the sower, the marriage supper and others of importance bearing on the same point. He then led them to the scenes of his transfiguration, and showed them Moses and Elias, the representatives of their Law and Prophecy, talking with Jesus about the consummation of his great work. He also pictured to them the destruction of their Beloved City, and their shameful crucifixion of their Rejected Messiah. Here is one of Ezekiel's living creatures with the face of a lion.

The second Gospel was written by Mark. He was not an apostle, but for years the constant companion of Peter, and also his faithful interpreter. And no doubt many of the detailed facts, memorable sayings and interesting doings of the Saviour, recorded in his Gospel, were the sweet reminiscences given him by this distinguished apostle. But Mark wrote as a servant to servants, and hence from a menial stand-point. He took the Master up, without any genealogy, when ready for service, and followed him through his life of toil and

labor, sorrow and servitude, as the Common Servant of the people. He presented Jesus to the populace as One who had worked many miracles, wrought many cures, calmed the raging tempest, cast out legions of devils, healed all manner of diseases, raised the dead, fed the multitudes, walked on the waves, unstopped the deaf ears, opened the blinded eyes, blessed the little children and taught his disciples that the chief among them should be servant of all. Here is the creature of burden with the face of an ox. Here is the Servant-King, bearing the weight of our woes and the burden of our sins.

The third Gospel was written by Luke. He was a doctor; and its medical terms show most conclusively that its peculiar phraseology came from the vocabulary of a physician. Luke was not an apostle, but for a time the fellow-traveler of Paul, the great apostle of the Gentiles. He wrote his Gospel to humanity; and hence from the human stand-point. He traced the genealogy of Jesus clear back to Adam. He gave an interesting account of his birth, and recorded some incidents of his infancy. He brought him on up to manhood, increasing in stature, and growing in knowledge and wisdom with the flight of years. He led him to the Jordan, consecrated him a Priest forever after the order of Melchisedec, and started him out upon his public ministry. Jesus was tempted of the devil, succored by the Father and gained a most signal victory for humanity. He preached in Galilee, chose his twelve apostles, sent out the seventy, invited to the Gospel feast, spoke of his lost sheep, received the prodigal son, wept over Jerusalem, was mocked by Herod, sentenced by Pilate, crucified by his

enemies and buried by his disciples. Here is Ezekiel's living creature with the face, and fate of a man.

But the fourth Gospel was written by the beloved apostle John. He wrote more especially to the Church; and hence from the divine stand-point. John wrote his Gospel in his old age, and it contains many of the sweetest, and most precious reminiscences of his Lord's sacred life and sacrificial death. He loved to contemplate the Master as a Divine Being. He viewed him almost constantly during his later years from the divine stand-point. He saw in him the Alpha and Omega, the Incarnate Word, the Rabbi, or Master of Israel, the Messiah, or Christ of Prophecy, the Bread of Life, the Light of the World, the Son of God, the Father's Gift of Love, the Risen Saviour and the Ascended God. Here is Ezekiel's fourth living creature with the face, and flight of an eagle mounting up to heaven.

These four Synoptic Gospels teach us three things, concerning Jesus Christ, which can not be successfully contradicted: namely, that he was verily and truly man; that he was just as truly and verily God, and consequently that substantial divinity, and real humanity were combined in his person as manifested in the flesh. The Christ of these Gospels then was evidently composed of two distinct natures, the human and the divine. But these two factors blended with such perfect harmony, shaded into each other with such exquisite perfection, as to constitute a most desirable unity, and give us, in the mysterious person of Jesus Christ, but one Saviour. This compound nature of the King is the combined result of the facts narrated, and not the artificial product of its own delineators. For the Evangelists were most



artless in the indirect creation of this wonderful character of their Historic Hero. They recorded no bursts of admiration at the displays of his matchless power, or the manifestations of his infinite condescension. They simply chronicled his words and works without approval or applause; and thus they most successfully delineated his distinctive character; brought to light his marvelous nature, and gave the world its greatest wonder and richest blessing, the Christ of his own inspired Gospels.

Then, if the Christ of these Gospels be a historic reality, this satisfies all the historical statements, and conditions of the case. But if he be a mere ideal creation, this involves a mass of hopeless contradictions and sacrilegious absurdities, from which reason, refusing credence, intuitively recoils. For it would be impossible to depict a more perfectly human Jesus, or a more obviously divine Christ than the Jesus Christ of these inspired Gospels, which unite in him the highest conceivable dignity with the lowest possible humiliation. History nowhere records a more perfectly human, or a more genuinely divine character than these Gospels give to Jesus Christ. The human, and divine natures of the King then were inseparately united, actually and closely blended, and constituted the two principal factors in his mysterious character, as delineated in this magnificent portraiture. But none of the Spurious Gospels contradict this position. They all, with one accord, chime in with inspiration and pronounce his nature a combination of the human and divine.

How humanity and divinity were harmonized in the Incarnate Son, we can not tell. These combined natures of the King baffle the comprehension of the finite mind.



The relations which existed between these two elements are also beyond the grasp of the ablest theologians of the world. But that there was infinite wisdom, and exhausted mines of wealth in this feature of the great Remedial System, the history of all subsequent ages fully attests. The God-man walked forth in his humanity among men, and they readily recognized his divinity.

The Representative of heaven and earth was seen in all the manifestations of his human weakness and divine power. In the King earthly sorrow was blended with heavenly wisdom, and eternal glory lost in his compassionate love for sinners. His wonderful nature was crowned with his personal originality. And his humanity and divinity need no stronger proofs of the reality of their existence than are to be found in his own extraordinary life.

Vicarious suffering for sin, in human form, was possible only when that form was clothed with the merits of a divine nature. Hence we do not insist on the union of the divine and human in Christ, as a mere mysterious theological dogma ; but as a most important and practical element in the Divine Economy of human redemption. The presence of Deity on the field of battle, indicated at once the power of sin, and the ruin it had wrought in the world. It also pointed out the imminent danger of the pending crisis. But while the divine nature, with its fullness of grace and reserve of power, insured a great victory, it was equally important, and befitting that human nature should also be represented in the person of the Mighty Conqueror, that sympathy and sorrow might be mingled with grace and glory, in the great work of man's salvation. The solitude and

shadows of a soul filled with the sorrows, and burdened with the suffering of others, proclaim his distinctive humanity, while the meekness and majesty with which he bowed his mighty head, in behalf of his enemies, to the fatal stroke of imperial justice, proves, beyond a doubt, his matchless divinity. From the very depth of his crushed, and bleeding heart arose the fragrance of deepest devotion to God, and of divine compassion for man. The sacred influences of that horrible hour have floated triumphantly down the stream of time, and are destined to flood eternity with the loved memories of his mercies and his woes. It is when seen in this two-fold nature, that the Incarnation towers to the very heavens, and sends down its showers of grace and floods of glory, for the regeneration of a wicked world.

This mysterious union of the King's compound nature was not perfected at his nativity. Humanity did not drink in, or identify itself at once with all the infinite perfections and attributes of Deity. The perfecting of this union required years of growth, developement and assimilation upon the part of his humanity. He must, as a human being, develop in stature, increase in knowledge, advance in wisdom and grow in grace, and also in favor with God and man for thirty years, before he can, as God-man, complete in all the perfections of this marvelous union, become the successful Mediator between God and man. He must also have an experience, as well as a development, in his human nature, which will fit him for the grave, and important mission of reconciling depraved humanity with Exalted Divinity. He must needs be touched with the feeling of human infirmities, before he could reach down, with his divine

hand, clasp a fallen race and lift it up, out of the depth and degradation of sin, into the marvelous light and liberty of the Divine Presence. The perfection of this union, however, was eventually accomplished. The Model Man blended, at length, in perfect harmony with the Gospel God. This gave to the world its greatest, and most sublime prodigy—a God-man as its Prophet, Priest and King.

#### THE PROOF OF THE KING'S HUMANITY

is but the sad history of his humiliation. In his infinite condescension, he left his eternal throne of glory, passed by the higher order of intelligences, took not upon him the nature of angels, but descended to the level of fallen humanity, clothed himself in the corruptions of the flesh—assumed our nature, and became our Second Adam and Royal Advocate. The simple fact that he did become our Second Adam, or the Last Representative of the race, proves his humanity, and clothes him at once with our fallen nature. For Adam represented human nature as a unit—a single thing. He was on trial, under a law which demanded the establishment of a perfect character for the nature he represented. Perfect obedience was the only condition upon which this character could be formed. Upon no other terms could Adam ever be confirmed, under the covenant of works, and convey to those, who might afterwards wear this represented nature, a legal standing before God. But Adam failed in this obedience; and human nature fell with his fall. Adam was then banished, but not expelled. He was dead; and death reigned over the nature which he had subjected to the penalty of the law. It matters not what

death followed, as the penalty of this fall, for all death is eternal in its nature. Death is not the mere absence, or suspension of life, but its utter destruction. It is not an agent, but an effect; and hence has no power to stay its own reign. It could never end of itself. No matter then in what form death came, in this penalty, still it was eternal in its nature, and nothing short of divine power could ever terminate its dominion, and restore its subjects to the enjoyment of life again.

Our fallen nature lay in the meshes of sin and death, from which it could never have extricated itself. But at this critical juncture the King came to the rescue as our Second Adam. He came to do for the race what Adam had done, and also what he had failed to do. He came both to represent human nature as a unit, and also to establish for it a perfect character under the law. But to do this the King himself must become a human being. He must wear human nature, before he can represent it. He must be made under the broken law, before he can magnify and make it honorable.

The fall of our first representative was through unbelief and disobedience. The restoration by our Second Representative was through obedience and faith. Adam represented us under a covenant of works, which carried with it a legitimate penalty—spiritual death. In his fall we also fell under the penalty of that covenant. But Christ came and represented us, under that same covenant, until he had worked out for human nature a perfect representative character under the law. He then paid the penalty of that covenant for us in his spiritual death upon the cross, brought the race out from under the covenant of works, with its paid penalty, and

placed it under the covenant of grace with its proffered blessings. But this covenant of grace has its penalty also, which is eternal death—everlasting banishment from the reconciled presence of God. Human nature has been placed on trial again. But under this covenant of grace every man is his own representative, and is accountable for his own conduct. Each one stands, or falls upon his or her own act of obedience or disobedience. This covenant is one of equity: hence Christ never has, and never will pay its penalty for any one. If broken by an individual, he must meet the penalty in his own person, for there will be none to pay it for him. Then if we are lost, it will be in consequence of our own, and not of Adam's transgression.

The form and features of the King are evidences of his humanity. He looked like a man. He walked forth among men, perfect in form and feature, with eyes beaming with gladness or streaming with tears; with a heart beating with love, or melting with sorrow, and with lips laden with blessings, or silent in sympathy. His was a manly majesty and a saintly beauty, which naturally awakened in the mind feelings of religious veneration. For he was not clothed with soft raiment, or clad in gorgeous apparel. No kingly robes mantled his shoulders; no imperial crown adorned his brow. He wore a simple oriental peasant's garb. His attraction, as a man, lay in his person and not in his apparel. Pilate says: One day in passing by the place of Siloe, where there was a great concourse of people, I observed, in the midst of the group, a young man who was leaning against a tree, calmly addressing the multitude. I was told it was Jesus. This I could easily have suspected, so great



was the difference between him and those who were listening to him. He appeared to be about thirty years of age. His golden colored hair and beard gave to his appearance a celestial aspect. Never have I seen a sweeter, or a more serene countenance. What a contrast between him and his hearers, with their black beards and tawny complexion. \* \* \* For some time I contemplated with admiration and awe this extraordinary type of man, a type of man unknown to our numerous painters, who have given form and figure to all the gods and heroes.

Jesus was a man of medium size, upon whose face the purity and charm of youth mingled with the thoughtfulness and dignity of manhood. His noble features were marred by sorrow, and his grave countenance saddened with grief. His pure, penetrating eyes had often glowed through tears. Yet no man could look unmoved and unawed into his calm and comely face. It was the face of a man, but it wore too much of the grace and majesty of the King in his beauty, or the Son in his glory. Publius Lentullus, in a letter to the Roman Senate, said: Conscript fathers, there has appeared in these, our days, a man named Jesus Christ, who is yet living among us, and of the Gentiles is accepted as a prophet of great truth. But his own disciples call him the Son of God. He hath raised the dead and cured all manner of diseases. He is a man of nature, somewhat tall and comely, with a very ruddy countenance, such as the beholder may both love and fear. His hair is the color of the filbert when fully ripe, plain to his ears, whence downward it is more orient of color, curling and waving about his shoulders. In the middle of his head



is a seam or partition of long hair, after the manner of the Nazarites. His forehead is plain and delicate, his face without spot or wrinkle, beautified with a comely red, his nose and mouth are exactly formed, his beard is of the color of his hair, and thick, not of any great length, but forked. In reproving he is terrible; in admonishing, courteous; in speaking, very modest and wise; in proportion of body, well shaped. None have seen him laugh, but many have seen him weep. A man for his surpassing beauty excelling the children of men.

The fact that Jesus often grew weary, that his nature demanded rest, food and sleep as he journeyed on through life, is a strong evidence of his humanity. In some respects his life was apart from men—unlike other men; but after all, he was more human than humanity itself. He recognized, as no other individual ever did, the ties and obligations which bound him to his fellow-men. Man, in his simple humanity, was so precious to Jesus that he had but little to say about the distinction between men. It was enough for him to know that one wore the same nature which he came to represent, belonged to the same race which he came to redeem, and he was ready at once to welcome him to his heart, and bear his burdens upon his own soul. The common people soon learned to recognize in the Noble Nazarene a Friend to the needy, a Comforter of the afflicted and the Preacher of Righteousness to the poor. Jesus was the very essence of humanity, divested of all its prejudices and imperfections. The purpose of his mission was to promote the happiness of his race, irrespective of station or standing, caste or nationality. His great, warm, sympathetic heart reached out, in its affec-

tions, after all classes and conditions of humanity. He embraced every opportunity to enforce his salutary lessons, and confer his inestimable favors upon all men. He placed himself among, and taught the great masses of humanity as no other teacher had ever done, in all the history of the world. Jesus has been humanity's Greatest Benefactor. He has done more than all others combined to stay the moving tide of misery, and ameliorate the sad condition of our race. His guiding hand may be traced all along the lines of human history: his commanding voice may be heard in all the reformations of human society, and his controlling power may be felt in all the conquests of human knowledge. His human life is without a parallel in the world's history. It is grander than the lives of all the great and good of earth. And he, who was so powerful in his human nature, is almighty in his divine attributes, and even Satan can not resist his matchless power. He will, at length, burst open the last brazen gate of cruelty, made fast with the iron bars of death, and let all his captives go free.

The fact that Jesus entered so fully into sympathy with others, and shed so many tears over them, expressive of his deep solicitude, is another strong proof of his humanity. There is a halo of glory which clusters around the sympathetic nature of the King, and presents him as preëminently human in the depth of his feelings for sinning and suffering humanity. The King's merciful mission to men had intimate relation to man's bitterest bereavements and highest hopes, as well as to his doubtful destiny. The great sigh of humanity's sick, and saddened soul rose up from the deepest depth

of its sufferings and sorrows, when men gazed up into the helpless heavens, which appeared to keep the untold secret of their future weal or woe locked up in its capacious bosom. But, at last, that signal sigh found an echo in the responsive soul of the Sympathetic Saviour. And the sad sigh of true penitence rises to heaven no more, without a ready response from the great heart of the King, who is still touched with the feelings of our infirmities. The King often wept. Tears are a luxury to humanity: They open the heart for the inflowing of the greatest, and most lasting of all joys. Jesus went forth into the field as a laborer, toiling and weeping, watering the seed sown with his own tears. He labored on, under the shadow of a great sorrow, and toiled on, under the weight of a mighty burden, that he might comfort all who mourn, and pour the oil of gladness into every bleeding and broken heart. There is hope for the sinner, who weeps at the sight of the cross. There is always good in tears, when they lead us to the Fountain of Joy. The cross was designed to make men weep, only that they might sing and shout for gladness. When Jesus is formed in our hearts—the hope of glory, our tears are lost in gratitude, our mourning turned into gladness and we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

The depth of the King's humility, and infinite condescension, prove his humanity. His incarnation furnishes us with an example of condescension and humility, unparalleled in the world's history. He fathomed the most fearful depth of humiliation. He took upon him the form of a servant, and made himself of no reputation that he might lift fallen humanity up from its low estate

of degradation and despair, to the hopes of a higher and holier life. It was that his race might be treated as innocent, that the King submitted to the shame and humiliation of Calvary. It was that the world's iniquity might be blotted out, that the blood of Jesus was shed upon the cross. It was that he might spoil the dominion of death, and throw wide open the gates of life to all men, that the Condescending Conqueror consented to enter the grave, and dwell among the dead. Calvary was the scene of the King's most wonderful humiliation; the spot of his saddest and sorest trials, and the place of his deepest and darkest condescension. Here, Jesus died that sinners might live. Here, Christ paid the debt that humanity could not pay. Here, the King gave himself an humble ransom for the sins of the world. Humility! humility! humility! without a comparison.

The King's great burden of sorrow, and immense weight of agony are among the most powerful evidences of his humanity. Every pang of sorrow, and every piercing agony felt by the Suffering Saviour are so many proofs of his dying love for a lost and ruined race. But they are, none the less, evidences of his own humanity. It was the angry cloud of a world's sin, which threw a shadow of intense darkness over his burdened soul, and left him hanging upon the cross smitten, afflicted and forsaken of God. Here, he bore the burden of humanity's griefs, and carried the weight of her sorrows that he might pour the oil of gladness into human hearts, and the balm of consolation into wounded souls. But the Man of Sorrows is also the fountain of great joy to all people, and the Lamb of Agony, the well-spring of life to the world. The mighty sorrow of the King's last

night in the bloody Garden of Gethsemane, and the final and fearful agonies of the next day upon the crimson cross of Calvary, will be the wonder of holy angels and redeemed men forever.

The purity and grandeur of the King's human nature, you see, were often put to the sorest tests ; but never found wanting. And his followers should learn from his own life, that they are to pass through weakness to strength, through failures to success, through defeat to victory ; and through the sufferings, consequent to human nature, enter at last into the joys of heaven.

#### THE FACTS, RELATIVE TO THE KING'S DIVINITY,

tell most beautifully the story of his exaltation. For, the Father hath highly exalted him, and given him a name high above every other name, whether on earth or in heaven. The sad scenes of his humiliation closed on the morning of his triumphant resurrection, and the joyful reign of his exaltation began. Jesus was buried like a pauper, by the hand of charity, but, on the morning of the third day, he arose Monarch of all his omniscient eye could survey. He looked abroad, into infinite space, compassed in his thoughts the vast regions of a boundless universe, filled with the glories and crowned with the monuments of his own creative power, and called it all his own. He slept in the tomb of Joseph the humiliating sleep of death ; but he awoke, in his exaltation, King of kings, to receive the devout homage and adoration of a ransomed world. But if we would climb to the height of the King's exaltation, we must measure the distance from the cross of Calvary to his throne in glory. If we would contrast faithfully his exaltation with his humilia-



tion, we must follow him from earth to heaven. And if we would view successfully both the humanity and divinity of the King of Glory, we must see him in all the important events between his cradle and his crown.

The infinite goodness of the King proves his divinity. Nothing absolutely good can be found in a mere man: there is no good in him. But Christ is the origin of all that is good in the world. He is of all real good the Bountiful Giver. The wicked may strive to be good, but of themselves they can do nothing. They may surge against the billows manfully, but they can never raise their drooping heads above the wide and wasting waves of death, which roll in fury over the troubled sea of sin. Their only hope of rescue is to be found in a Divine Hand. To the King may be traced, through the progress of the ages, all the ameliorating influences brought to bear upon suffering and sorrowing humanity. Every good, obtainable by our fallen race, is centered in the life-work or death-agonies of Jesus of Nazareth. Humanity was surging in vain amid the storms of sin, while divine justice, like a great barrier, closed every avenue to the city of refuge, and dashed to pieces every fond and cherished hope of happiness. Burdened souls were driven by the resistless tide of guilt against the invulnerable laws of God, which guarded the gates of heaven. But at last a rent was opened in the mighty barrier, through the victory of the cross, and a narrow pathway led humanity to the great Fountain of all Good.

The King's goodness was not without its visible manifestations in his eventful life. He fed the destitute thousands, but suffered himself the pangs of hunger. He administered consolation to those in deepest distress,

while he was preëminently the Man of Sorrows. He cast devils out of many, yet was himself sorely tempted of Satan. He lifted the burden of sin from the souls of others, while bearing in his own body the sins of the world. He raised many from the dead, and yet he submitted to the pangs and agonies of the most shameful and cruel of all deaths. He went about constantly, doing all manner of good both to the souls and bodies of men.

The King was most emphatically the Friend of all classes of sinners. He was equally ready to bestow good upon the rich, who were courted and envied on account of their abundant wealth, and the poor, who were despised and oppressed because of their extreme poverty. He visited alike the princely mansion of the aristocratic Pharisee and the humble cottage of the hated publican. He cordially tendered life to the rich young lawyer, and with equal courtesy touched and healed the outcast leper. No matter where he went, the multitude of impotent, lame, maim, halt and blind crowded the pathway of the Healer and Helper, hoping to attract his attention, and receive his blessings. Goodness was perfectly natural with the Saviour. He could not refrain from pitying the poor, and nourishing the needy. The object of his great mission into this sin-stricken world was to do good—to bring joy to the living and life to the dead. Only let us follow lovingly this Good Shepherd of humanity, through the days of peace and prosperity, and he will tenderly lead us through the dark nights of sorrow and adversity. Let us gladly walk with him in the sunshine of life, and he will surely accompany us through the shades and shadows of death.

The matchless love of the King also attests his divinity. He loved as no mere human being ever did, or ever will love. His whole soul ran out in deepest solicitude, after the objects of his affections. His great heart was constantly burdened, with the intense anxiety he felt for the subjects of his compassionate love. Jesus loved a world, steeped in sin and saturated with crime, far better than that world, ransomed from death with his own blood, has ever loved him in return. This divine love, which the King brought from heaven to earth, is deep enough to fathom the infinite ocean of human grief. It has a height, but no top; a depth, but no bottom, and a length and breadth, but no dimensions. It is broad enough to embrace in its arms of affection all classes and conditions of humanity. The King's loving heart felt a weight of untold anguish, infinitely heavier than any burden of sorrow ever borne by mere human hearts. The great flood of human woe, rushing down the ages, rolled its mighty burden of grief upon the Man of Sorrows. Humanity, in its weakness, was naturally too strong for Divinity, in its omnipotence. The infinite love of Jesus forced him to stoop down and bless mankind, in its wretchedness. Human sympathy indeed is precious, but the grief of our poor hearts often demand just such compassionate love as the Divine One alone can bestow upon us. For, there is no cure for the greatest sorrows of life, save that which the infinite love of Jesus brings to the bleeding heart. Divine compassion is infinitely deeper than human woes, and with such help, as it can bring, our heaviest burdens are easily borne. Such compassion and such grief are genial companions here. Like

two kindred spirits, they walk, hand in hand, through this life, but they part forever at the Jordan of death.

The world was one great lazar-house. Reason was blinded; conscience was paralyzed; passion raging with delirium; hope trembling with feebleness, and faith sinking in unbelief when the King of Glory brought strength to the feeble, courage to the fainting and victory to the dying soul, through the manifestations of his infinite love for the world. This wonderful love is the true foundation upon which the sacred story of the cross reposes in perfect security. Here is the central figure of Christianity, which the feeble efforts of infidelity, in its varied forms and phases, can never move from its moorings. Such divine love, with its bounties, should not be slighted by human hatred, with all its wants and woes. Our gratitude to the King should only be measured by this infinite love, which has a hold upon the heart of the world that can never be severed.

The fearless fortitude of the King bears testimony in favor of his divinity. His was not a heedless spirit, nor the reckless daring of one who rejoices in danger. But it was cool, calculating heroism, such as the world had never known before. In the King, all the virtues and graces were perfectly developed. He was calm, meek, gentle, harmless and docile as the lamb. But at the same time, he had moral courage, fortitude and daring sufficient for the conquest of the world. He was bold enough to meet, and powerful enough to overcome every enemy. The King knew no fear. He could not falter. He had the courage of a lion. He walked fearless and alone over the wild wastes, and through the sore temptations of the desert. He stood

calm and serene before kings, who trembled in his presence. And when the dark counsels of the rulers were complete, and they mustered courage to summon him before their tribunals of injustice, he hesitated not to meet them face to face. More than once he had anticipated death, with its gathering storms of sin and sorrow. He knew full well that every step brought him that much nearer the rugged cross of Calvary. But he held on his way without wavering. He only needed to commune awhile with heaven, in order to gird up his soul for the mock trial, sore scourging and crowning agonies of the cross, and the spirit had soon gained the ascendancy over the flesh. Jesus knew that the awful conflict was his own—that he must tread the wine-press of this fearful agony alone. For there were none to hold his hand, or strengthen his heart as he passed through the critical crisis. He was perfectly conscious of the fact that his own right hand, and his holy arm must bring him the victory. For he knew that, in the hour, and during the power of darkness, he would be deserted by his disciples, and forsaken by his God. But still his fortitude failed not. For, when the appointed time arrived, he met his fearful fate with the daring of a great Moral Hero in the strife of battle. His heroism was divine.

The heavenly majesty of the King is also a strong evidence in favor of his divinity. There was too much of heaven about him to be all of earth. Celestial majesty sat enthroned upon his gentle brow. The heavenly shades of his features, blended with the earthly but to deepen, and enrich them. The divine nature was so woven into the human as to give him, in all his meek-



ness and humility, a majestic bearing without a parallel in the archives of history.

The perfect character of the King furnishes another argument in favor of his divinity. Jesus presented the world with a character admitted by the most eminent enemies of the Cross to be the greatest that ever existed either in fact or fiction. No other character, whether real or ideal, approaches, even approximately, the grandeur of the King's royal character. And it is most remarkable that this sublime character evoked alike the admiration of the simple and the wise, and speaks alike powerfully to the higher affections of both the good and the bad. This great moral character in its highest perfection has for the lowest mind, in its infinite condescension and solicitude, a charm by which he may be led to imitate the Saviour's royal example. But the author of this character claimed to be divine; and he was either all he claimed to be, and what prophecy and history represent him as being, or his character, even for truthfulness, stands impeached, and the whole fabric of Christianity is overthrown. This exalted character can only be accounted for on the theory of his divinity.

The King's perfect knowledge of men gives us another plea in favor of his divinity. Jesus mastered human nature. He knew man perfectly, and needed not the testimony of any concerning him. We may imagine there was something penetrating in his soft brown eye, that touched it with the brightness of poetic inspiration. One glance from that all-seeing eye of the Divine Prophet laid bare the inmost recesses, and revealed all the secret thoughts of the soul. He saw and knew

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men as they could not see and know themselves. He not only read the hidden purposes of their hearts, but also understood full well the fearful consequences of their lives in all their varied and, to them, uncertain results. He still has a perfect knowledge of all men. The scenes which gild the past pleasures of the sinner, but deepen the dismal shadows of his present sorrows, and darken the impenetrable gloom of his eternal destiny, are all spread out before the omniscient vision of the King of Glory.

The moral elevation of the King speaks loudly in favor of his divinity. Aside from the Jewish nation, antiquity had no just conception of moral evil. With them an action was either guiltless, irresistible, or else Deity was responsible for its consequences. Neither priests nor people had any aim or desire, in their sacrifices and oblations, beyond the removal of physical defilement. There was, to them, a magical effect in propitiatory rites, though they did not change, even the inclination of their wills, from evil. But Jesus reached a moral elevation far above that of his age and surroundings. His code of morals constituted a system of the highest conceivable elevation, and was applicable alike to all classes and conditions of humanity. His teachings were marked by a moral tone so far above his own, or any other age, as to place them at once far beyond the reach of man's invention. The estimate which Jesus placed upon mere ritualistic worship, in an age when rites and ceremonies with many even of his own nation, constituted the sum total of religion, proved him to be the great Spiritual Head of the Levitical Priesthood. And the sagacity with which he looked into, and opened up the mysteries

of the future, showed him to be the greatest of all the prophets, with more than ordinary inspiration. Divine redemption, by a Divine Redeemer, is already the keynote to our holy religion, and its future developments will be the wonder of the world. This glorious strain will break out ere long in living music from multiplied millions of regenerated souls, and the grand chorus shall shake the earth with the sweet hallelujahs of time, and rend the heavens with the loud hosannas of eternity.

The King's claims to equality with the Father ought to settle, at once and forever, the question of his divinity. For, if equal to the Deity, then to him belonged the infinite perfections of all the divine attributes. Like the Father, he must have possessed a wisdom omniscient, a power almighty, a presence universal, a holiness immaculate, a goodness overshadowing all, a justice without respect to persons, a truth firmer than the foundations of the everlasting hills, a mercy reaching even the rebellious and a love embracing all mankind. All the infinite attributes of Deity clustered around the pathway of Jesus, like so many burnished orbs, encircling the sun in his brilliant career through the heavens: therefore he must have been divine.

The calmness and dignity of the King, in the presence of earth's dignitaries, proved him to be infinitely above all who were in authority. The exact fulfillment of prophecy, in the person of the Humble Nazarene, bore sacred testimony to the justice of his claims to the Messiahship. The authority by which he forgave sins, and wrought many miracles, showed him to be more than a mere man. The claims he made, upon his subjects, recognized the King's inherent worthiness of their un-

bounded homage and adoration. The annulling of old, and the enunciation of new precepts and principles, pervaded by the deepest spirituality, attested his divinity. The song of angels, the voice of the Father, and a thousand other things proclaimed his Immaculate Sonship. The King spoke as a God, and his matchless voice gave no uncertain sound. Many of the sayings of Jesus would have been sheer presumption, if uttered by a man devoid of all consciousness of indwelling divinity. Yea, more! It would have been arrogance, inconsistent with either humility or holiness, for any mere human being to assume such prerogatives as Jesus took to himself. But the matchless victories of his perfect life, and the immortal trophies of his sacrificial death, award him the honor of divine prerogatives. Go to the cross, if you desire farther evidence of the King's divinity. The darkened heavens, the quaking earth, the rending rocks, and the rising dead, all bear sacred testimony to this grand truth, which men presumptuously deny. Here the King seals all his claims to the Messiahship, with the overwhelming testimony of his own bloody agonies, upon the cross. His double mode of speaking of himself proved his two-fold nature, just as its analogy in us proves that we are both mortal and immortal. But some acknowledge, that he was almost a God; and yet say, after all, he was only a mere man. Whatever falls short of infinity, falls infinitely short of Deity. The King was either divine, or else he was infinitely below Divinity. He proves himself to be infinitely above humanity, by speaking so far in advance of all ages; and therefore he must be divine. But his church stands to-day, in the center of all history, upon

the Rock of Ages, triumphantly proclaiming his divinity. And all the false theories, with reference to his superhuman character, and superior moral excellence, which would rob him of his divine glory, crumble and fall before these sublime revelations from heaven.

The religion, inaugurated by the King, proves his divinity. The divine origin of his holy religion need no longer be called in question, since its own intrinsic value, as well as its external glory, is being manifested everywhere in the lives and labors of its ardent devotees. Every page of ecclesiastical history is a sacred witness to the simplicity and fidelity with which this holy religion has enthroned itself in the hearts, and held its sway in the lives of the King's followers. It exerts a controlling influence over its subjects. It beautifies our speech, with truth and purity; adorns our deportment, with courtesy and refinement; clothes our persons, with grace and culture, and fills our homes, with peace and plenty. It lifts us up, when we will be lifted by it, to the perfection of beauty, and the grandeur of holiness. It enables us to keep our desires, appetites and passions, all in willing subjection to the laws of purity, truth and love. In fact, this religion of the cross has already worked wonders in the world. It has curbed human passion, checked inhuman cruelty and branded, as infamous, beastly suicide. It has, to some degree, remedied the wrongs of all classes of humanity, and ameliorated the sufferings of the whole race of mankind. It has protected the captive, rescued the gladiator and freed the slave. It has fed the orphan, sheltered the poor and nursed the sick. It has also elevated womanhood, purified manhood and crowned the tender years



of childhood-life with a halo of sacred innocence. This holy religion is still clad with all its heaven-born freshness and glory. Time can never whiten its locks, palsy its hands, or diminish its power. It is, like its author, divine, and hence destined to live on, in immortal youth, forever.

No religion has a simpler form of worship, a more sublime code of morals or grander truths to sustain it, than the religion of the cross. The Jewish system had become extremely burdensome to the conscientious, and a most fruitful source of hypocrisy to the mischievous masses. The Rabbis, by their unique expansions and artificial interpretations, had converted their religion into a life-long servitude. And the scribes and Pharisees, with their senseless traditions and cold formalities, had poisoned the purest principles of its morality, and deadened the strongest pulsations of its spiritual life. But Jesus expanded this dwarfed religion of the Jews into a catholic religion for the whole world. His religion is absolutely free from everything of a narrowly contracted, or selfish character. It is that much like its Divine Author. He was a Jew, but loved even the Samaritans. He was of the seed of Abraham, but embraced, in the arms of his affections, all mankind as a common brotherhood. He regarded with tender solicitude and deepest emotion the descendants of Jacob, but loved no less devotedly the poor Gentile publicans and sinners. When Israel's ideal of a religious life was realized, only in the man who withdrew from society, and buried himself in the ascetic caverns of the mountains, or lost himself in the deepest solitudes of the deserts, Jesus brought his religion into the very homes,

hearts and lives of men. For the penance and solitude of the hermit, he substitutes the benevolence and sunshine of the active laborer in his moral vineyard. He gave no sanction to the celibacy of the ascetic, or to the monastic life of the monk. His religion is designed to give a sunny face and a warm heart to its devotees. Heaven will lavish her blessings and honors upon all its faithful advocates.

The religion of the cross has wielded a greater influence for good in human hearts, and exerted a mightier power over the mind of humanity than all the other religions of the world combined. Take as an example modern Spiritualism with its boasted wonders, and what has it done for fallen humanity? Who has it made better or wiser by its marvelous disclosures? With all its alleged powers of penetrating into the secrets of the unseen world, it has made no man either holier or happier. It is a miserable failure, and its most ardent votaries are perfectly conscious of the fact. And just so it is with Mormonism, Mohammedanism, and a score of other isms, which we might mention. But the religion of Jesus Christ is an acknowledged power for good in the world. He placed it upon a sure foundation. The principles it inculcates are fundamental. They look both to our happiness here, and to our eternal happiness hereafter. They are also practical. They fulfill the whole law of God. They make a want of power, the only limitation of obedience to God. The true ideal of this genuine religion reflects, with its pure and all-embracing love, the very image of its Divine Author, and hence bears the seal and sanction of heaven.

Prior to the King's advent individuality was either un-

known, or much restricted in its sphere of action. Conscience had almost no liberty at all. Whatever the State regarded as expedient must be done. Men could not act untrammelled, even in private or social affairs, much less in moral or religious matters. The will of the Governor was everything, while the wishes of the individual subject were mere ciphers. But the religion of Jesus inaugurated both a social and moral reformation, which have swept over the nations of the earth, giving force to individuality, and freedom to the human conscience.

At the King's coming, reason was powerless. Her dominion had been lost. Her frail barriers had been swept away, by the surging tides of guilt. The religion of the cross must supersede philosophy and moral ethics, or the world is lost. The merciful mission of the Messiah was her only hope. Many of the King's virtues have survived his death. They have been transmitted, through his followers, to succeeding generations, until they have done much in reclaiming, and shaping the world's destiny. The King's counsels have been embalmed for ages, in the memories of his disciples. They have exerted a controlling influence over their lives of consecrated devotion to the Master. There was something in the personal character of the King, that produced a wonderful admiration for him in the hearts of all his subjects. There have been martyrs to all religious creeds. But no other religion ever marshaled such an army of martyrs, who were willing to die because of the personal love they bore the founder of their religious faith. But this feeling has always characterized the martyrs of Christianity.

Before the Christian era, war was constantly being waged. Might was everywhere recognized as right. The stronger oppressed most cruelly the weaker. But the peace-speaking voice of this holy religion has echoed, along down through the passing centuries, until war is no longer the rule, but the exception among Christian nations. Queen Charity has been placed upon the throne, her brow encircled with all the Christian graces, and her life adorned with all the nameless virtues of Christianity. Now right is in the ascendancy; controls might, and shields the helpless from the oppressor. Antiquity had her poor as well as her rich. There were herds of paupers, in all her borders; and crowds of beggars, in all her streets, and on all her highways. But it was reserved for the religion of Jesus to found asylums of charity for the poor and unfortunate, and hospitals of mercy for the sick, and suffering of earth.

Then the religion of Jesus is not an imaginary, or powerless something. It is not merely a religion of notions, visions and ecstasies, but a divine reality. It is a presence to be realized; a lesson to be studied, and a power to be felt in the hearts, and exhibited in the lives of men. It is no weird, romantic legend or cunningly devised fable; but a divine force, that molds character, renews life and saves souls. It is a religion, which has driven ignorance and superstition from millions of dark homes, and filled them with the light of its own joy and gladness. It is a religion, which has influenced men, whose lips were once loud with cursing, and whose hearts were once black with blasphemy, to sing in praise, and plead in prayer the name of its Divine

Author. Neither is it a religion destitute of sentiment, feeling or emotion; for these are quite as essential to acceptable service, as taste, reason or conscience.

Sin, like a besom of destruction, had swept over the earth, with the chill of death in its blast. The dark waves of pollution, and the blood-stained billows of crime had dashed, in fury and violence, for four thousand years against the citadels of justice and truth. Ruin and desolation marked the ravages of sin. It had left many a shipwrecked mariner stranded upon the shores of time. The world, under its reign, had become almost a lifeless waste. Its great heart was beating in fear, and struggling in peril, while its life-currents were dashing madly, amid the fires of passion, against the dark shores of eternity. In this world, subdued by Satan and saturated with sin, want and woe were gloomy guests, and vice and misery their constant companions. But when the religion of the cross poured its rays of divine light upon the surrounding darkness, the prison of despair was transformed into a garden of paradise, dens of iniquity converted into sanctuaries of praise and this demonized world made, once more, the abode of peace and the vestibule of heaven. How can we question the divine reality of a religion which displays such wonderful power, in its onward march for the conquest of this sin-cursed world?

Certainly there is matchless power, and great grace in the religion of the cross. It imparts an inspiration to its devotees, otherwise unknown to humanity. It fires our hearts with zeal, fills our souls with energy and prepares us to meet death with the firmest faith, and most fearless fortitude. It changes death, from a ven-



omous serpent to a veiled angel ; from a dreaded demon to a welcome messenger ; from the greatest possible calamity to eternal gain. Hence, history records many instances of Christian resignation and courage, in the dying hour, without parallels in the archives of heathen lands. But it seems strange that the dying never weep. Perhaps the tears of the doomed are lost in despair, while the weeping of the saved is turned into joy, at the first glimpse of the eternal world. At any rate, this divine religion must impart great comfort in the hour of death. The Christian is pillowed upon a dying bed. His physician assures him that his moments are almost numbered—that he soon must die. His mind is clear, his heart is glad and his soul is happy. Perfectly calm and serene is his joyous spirit. No tear-drop dims his aged eye. No murmur falls from his faltering tongue. No word of doubt escapes his parched lips. Sweetest resignation plays upon every feature of his wrinkled brow. Heavenly hope speaks out in every expression of his glowing countenance. He has lost sight of earth. He gazes with infinite delight into heaven. The sting of death is gone—lost in the enraptured visions of life. He has fought all life's battles, and won its last great victory. He has reached, at last, the lovely Land of Bulah ; and his happy soul is floating out upon a boundless sea of glory. A bright convoy of angels are coming, on swift wings, to escort him home to heaven. The last word has been spoken. The last breath is being drawn. He is gone. Happy moment ! Victorious death ! He passes out most joyfully, mounts the ascending chariot, a congenial companion for angels, and takes up that most delightful of all journeys—

the swift transit from earth to heaven. They soon rise above the splendors of the first and second heavens. They speed on over the fields of light toward the New Jerusalem. Now they enter the Heaven of heavens, and all its matchless glories burst full on his enraptured vision. Legions of angels and archangels, seraphim and cherubim, greet him with their warmest congratulations. Departed friends strike glad hands with him, and bid him more than welcome to the Land of the Blessed. Dear loved ones clasp him in their fond embraces, with all the raptures of heavenly love. The King hails him eternally happy, and assigns him a home in the mansions of glory. Happy soul, eternally blessed!

Such are the evidences of his holy religion in support of the divinity of its Royal Author. In fact, the King's divinity constitutes the very essence of his religion. Therefore, it must be a divine reality, else this religion could not be a divine revelation. But this Divine King guides the tiny insect, which flits in the sunbeam, and supports the mighty archangel, whose brilliant wings illuminate the heavens, in his rapid flight. This King of Glory directs the atom of air in the whirlwind and controls the burning comet as it doubles heaven's wide cape and returns to the earth, after the long lapse of circling centuries. Who can longer doubt his divinity?



## THE TITLES OF THE KING.

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### CHAPTER VI.

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*I know not to give flattering titles.*—JOB 32: 22.

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THERE are two hundred and one different names and titles, by which the King is designated in the Holy Bible. We can only notice a few of the more important of these sacred appellations in this chapter.

The enemies of the King called him, in derision, **THE FRIEND OF SINNERS**. No more precious, or appropriate title could have been given him. We are all sinners; and should be happy to know that Jesus is our dearest and best Friend. His merciful mission, to earth, was in the interest of sinners. The burdens of his life were all borne for sinners. The agonies of his death were all endured for sinners. Then truly, Jesus was the Friend of Sinners. He pities the poor helpless sinner, but hates sin with an eternal hatred. He died that the guilty, condemned sinner might live; but he can not regard the enormity of his sin with indifference, not even with the least degree of allowance.

The King is a Friend indeed, because a Friend in need. Sinners are all in need of salvation. They ought to be rescued from the power and dominion of sin. Jesus is able, and willing to accomplish this work. He only waits an expression, which indicates a sincere de-

sire to be saved, upon the sinner's part. His divine power stands pledged to assist human weakness, at any and all times, in liberating itself from the bondage and thralldom of sin. But the feeble must seek the aid of, and coöperate with the Mighty, before the sin-fettered soul can be set at liberty; and the sinner be made a saint. The King's almighty power, and infinite mercy must wait for the consent of finite minds, and the reception of human hearts, before light can banish darkness, and life reign over the subdued dominion of death. Human faith must reach forth and take hold of Divine Might; the trembling hand must be laid in the Omnipotent Grasp; the dying sinner must be delivered over to the Living Lord, before the prison doors of sin can be thrown open, and the captive soul be set at perfect liberty. The human and Divine must ever coöperate, in this great work of saving sinners.

The King is a Friend, who brings help to the friendless. He is the Soul-seeker, who follows hard in the foot-prints of the lost and ruined sinner. But, with all the manifestations of his unsought friendship and deep solicitude, the sinner often hesitates, falters, draws back and stays the Arm of infinite power, outstretched for his own rescue from eternal death. The gentle voice of Jesus only, can break the deep slumber of those who are sleeping the sleep of sin, and who fain would sleep on, even until death, were it not for the timely warning of this, ever Watchful Friend. But human faith must prepare the way for Divine Work, and human effort follow up the victories gained by Divine Power, in bringing the wandering soul back to God. Many of the brightest exponents of our holy religion have been men,

who walked with this Friend of Sinners, amid sorrows, sufferings and sacrifices, searching for the loved and lost of earth.

But this best of all friends voluntarily became the substitute for sinners. He gave his own life-blood freely to quench the fires of guilt, burning in the sin-sick souls of suffering humanity. But this Great Sacrifice fails to win the hearts of many prodigal sons and daughters. They go on heedless and heartless with a sinning, sorrowing, dying world, while this warm-hearted, Sympathetic Friend is ever tendering them, in his own precious name, happiness here, and heaven hereafter. But if sinners sometimes seem determined to go on to endless destruction, we ought to make the way as hard as possible for them to travel. We should hold the cross of Calvary up constantly before their eyes; throw the mangled and bleeding body of the Friend of Sinners incessantly at their feet, and sprinkle their unhallowed pathways, all along through life, with the precious blood of Jesus.

Malachi speaks of the Messiah as THE MESSENGER OF THE COVENANT. Glorious messenger of a most precious covenant! Covenant, after covenant, had been given to the world. They paved the way for this new covenant of grace, which was to be established upon better promises, and milder propositions. These covenants were often broken, and trampled under foot. The race had wandered far from God. The world had lost her love for truth, and her hope of holiness. Her saints were without sanctity; her heroes without honor, and her poor without protection. Her power was fast waning, with the loss of faith; for her wisest men were deny-



ing facts, and following fables. The tombs and temples of Egypt, the philosophy of Greece, the splendors and luxuries of Babylon, with the golden eagles and conquering legions of Rome, could never restore her departed power, or bring back her wonted glory. She must wait the coming of the Messenger of Mercy. The ushering in of glad tidings to the world, must be reserved for the Messenger of the new Covenant of grace. The honor of lighting up the dark world, with the joys of a golden age, must be awarded to One mightier in power, and surpassing in glory all the great and good of earth.

The Heavenly Messenger came at last, with his wonderful message of salvation by grace; opened a door of hope to those, who were driven to the very verge of despair, and directed all wanderers to the Fountain of Living-waters, and the Highway of Holiness, leading up to heaven and to God. The calm, sweet voice of the Merciful Messenger sounds out, over the troubled ocean of life, and his hopeful words quell the fears of all hearts, and lead the multitudes on, through the drifting clouds of doubt and despondency, into the light and liberty of a living faith in Jesus. The stream of time is still coursing its way down through the centuries, and as the currents of human life ebb and flow upon its shores, many watchmen upon the walls of Zion, by the authority of the Messenger of the Covenant, are still inviting dying men and women everywhere to pass in at the open gate of mercy, and walk the golden-paved streets of the New Jerusalem.

Paul called the King, THE MEDIATOR OF THE NEW TESTAMENT. The New Testament is simply the King's will, more fully revealed to men than ever before. To give

this Testament legal force, the Testator died, and dedicated it with his own precious blood. This clothed it with unquestionable validity. It was through this New Testament, or perfectly revealed will, that the Merciful Mediator hoped to effect a reconciliation between God and man. Hence, he is very properly called the Mediator of the New Testament. The King virtually entered upon the administration of his mediatorial functions, as soon as sin made its entrance into the world. His divine appointment to this work, had been made, and ratified in the eternal counsels of heaven, long before the fall, or creation of man. But it was under this New Testament that he made his sacrificial offering for the sins of the world.

In order to be a Successful Mediator, it was necessary that the King be identified with the interests of both parties, and share alike, the confidence of both man and God. Hence he became a God-man, intimately related to both the offending, and offended parties. In this mysterious relationship to God and man, he came as a Powerful Mediator. The listening, longing world was looking for a Mighty Monarch, with the march of armies, and the casting down of thrones, but the Mediator of the New Testament came, like the rising sun, in silence, but with great power, and unparalleled glory. His grand mission is destined to become the song of all nations; and the ultimate glory of his mediatorial work will fill the Heaven of heavens, with the voices of his endless praise.

The King's mediatorial work will not close, until the last sinner is reconciled to God, or else banished forever from his peaceful presence. For the time is coming,

when this Wonderful Mediator shall have hushed every discordant note in the world. Then all voices will be blended, in perfect harmony with the Voice of Heaven: and every spirit of man, beat in sweetest unison with the one great Spirit of God. The human race needed an Influential Mediator—one who could plead its cause, bear its sins and save its souls. None but the Eternal King could be that Almighty Advocate, that Sinless Saviour, that Matchless Mediator of the New Testament.

John speaks of the King as THE GOOD SHEPHERD OF THE SHEEP. In fact, they are the King's own words. Jesus said, I am the Good Shepherd, and give unto my sheep eternal life. With an allegorical parable, he set before the authorities of Israel the distinguishing characteristics of true and false teachers. In this apologue, they could but see themselves as hirelings, false and treacherous, and Jesus as the Good Shepherd, of both Jews and Gentiles, who would prove true and faithful even unto death.

This precious title places the King in one of his most endearing relations to man. It is most expressive of his deep solicitude, and tender watch-care over the helpless and hopeless ones of his flock. Love has no better emblem, than that which is found in this sacred title. And it would be well for us to remember, that the Good Shepherd is no mere hireling, but the Owner of the flock; and therefore One, who feels a special, personal interest in the well-being of every member thereof. There is also much comfort in the assurance, that this Good Shepherd is perfectly familiar with all his flock, insomuch that he can call each sheep, large or small,

by its own name, and anticipate its every want, in the hour of darkness, danger or death. The Good Shepherd knows his own, if found at the dead hour of midnight, upon the bleak and barren mountains of sin, far away from the sheltered fold. He speaks, and his gentle voice is recognized by the wandering one. For he is also known of his. He restores the soul, brings back the wanderer, and keeps, until the day of eternal redemption, all whom the Father hath given him.

“There were ninety and nine, that safely lay  
In the shelter of the fold;  
But one, bare one, had wandered away,  
Far off from the gates of gold.  
Out in the desert, he heard its cry,  
Sick and helpless, and ready to die—  
Away on the mountains wild and bare,  
Away from the tender Shepherd’s care;  
But all through the mountains, thunder riven,  
And up from the rocky steep,  
There rose a cry to gates of heaven.  
Rejoice, I have found my sheep;  
And angels echoed around the throne,  
Rejoice, for the Lord brings back his own.”

The King is represented, as HUMANITY’S MOST SKILLFUL PHYSICIAN. Our hearts are by nature diseased; and our souls are sick even unto death. From the soles of our feet, even to the crowns of our heads, there is no soundness in us; but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores, which have not been closed, neither bound up, nor mollified with ointment. Sin had transformed our beautiful world into a great moral lazaret-house, and filled it with inmates the most degraded and loathsome. We can not refrain from stigmatizing it, as the deadly

upas-tree of the world, which has thrown its withering, blasting, blackening, damning shadows over all kindred, people and tongues of earth, until the world traveth in pain, even till now, and her sons and daughters, everywhere, are groaning under a burden of guilt and misery, the dire legacy to us, by sin bequeathed. But the Great Physician has the never-failing antidote for sin—the healing balm for the sin-sick soul—the elixir of life for sinning and dying humanity. He is the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. This leprosy of sin, like the fatal cancer, eats its way, living and growing on what it consumes and destroys. But our Heavenly Physician is perfectly familiar with this loathsome disease of the soul. He carries with him its only remedy. He opens the heart by his Spirit, purifies the soul with his own precious blood, and imparts life to the sinner, as the eternal gift of God.

We all need the services of this Skillful Physician every day, and every hour we live. We are always in danger. In the midst of life, we stand, side by side, with death. The partition which separates the two worlds is but a vapor. The transition from time to eternity is momentary. At all stages, and under all the varied circumstances of life, death, the solemn monitor, stands by our side ready to lay his icy grasp upon us, perchance without a moment's warning, and claim us as his own. The distance between us and this grim monster, may be measured, at any time, with a single step. Life and death are inseparable companions on earth. They walk together, hand in hand, all the way through this sin-cursed world. We are not, as we sometimes imagine, simply traveling towards a fearful precipice,



over which we will eventually fall into eternity. But we are walking upon its very brink, all the way through this uncertain life. Every point, in the path over which we are traveling, has proved fatal to some way-worn pilgrim of earth. And more than once, we have lost our foothold upon the sands of time, and trembled, for a moment, on the brink of eternity. Then, we can not afford to venture another step, without the presence of this Great Physician in whom we live and move and have our being. For just where our lamp of life may grow dim, and pale, and fade from mortal sight, no one knows but God.

There are times, when even the wicked and the worldly, the prayerless and profane feel their need of this Skillful Physician. It is in the wane of life, and the loss of earthly hope. It is when moral darkness enshrouds the soul, and no ray of spiritual light penetrates the surrounding gloom. It is when the pains of hell get hold upon them, and the darkness darkens still. It is when they realize that the light of life is fast receding, and, that darkness and death will soon be their doomed companions, for evermore. In these critical hours, there is nothing they so much desire, as spiritual life. Oh, that the Heavenly Physician would come, in the plenitude of his mercy! Oh, that the light of an eternal day would dawn, upon the blackness of this my darkest night, that there might be night with me no more forever! Far better is it with us, if the Great Physician always be a desired and welcome Guest, even when the heart is glad, and the cup of our earthly joy is full to overflowing. For then he will never forsake us, in the hour of affliction, or desert us in the time

of our greatest need. This Skillful Physician can not only restore, and sustain spiritual life ; but he also has equal power over natural life and death. He holds the keys, which unlock, both the graves of earth, and the gates of heaven. He will make the dark portals of death, to all his penitent patients, the gateway to an endless and immortal life.

Isaiah saw the King, as A DIVINE LAWGIVER. The legal feature, in the plan of human redemption, is a very interesting and important one. Prior to the King's advent, the law demanded justice; and nothing short of justice could meet, and satisfy its righteous claims. But when the Divine Lawgiver came, he represented us in the stern courts of justice, where he met, and satisfied all its claims upon humanity. He then introduced, into the great web of moral law, a stripe of equity, and formulated it in the golden rule, which he gave to the world. Justice required an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, and life for life. But equity, as introduced by Jesus, opened the way for the exercise of mercy. In fact, equity is an important element in the divine government. It is the pivot upon which our eternal destiny turned. For by the deeds of the law no flesh could be justified. However, equity is not in conflict with, but simply an enactment added to the divine law, by this Divine Lawgiver. And this essential element, in the divine government, has since been also embodied in all the civil codes of the world. So that now, equity, in our courts of assizes, often secures our rights even in the absence of law, while justice meets out our claims, only in fulfillment of the law's requirements. Just so in the divine government. All the benefits of the law, secured to its devotees

under the old dispensation, upon the principles of justice, and in consequence of obedience, are now bestowed upon us, in the absence of justice, upon the principles of equity, through faith in our most Merciful Lawgiver.

Equity, in the divine government, is the law of mercy. The sun of justice sank behind the gloomy horizon of Golgotha, on the day of the crucifixion, and the sun of mercy rose in gladness, on the morning of the third day, to shed his first soft rays of light upon a ransomed world. The language of equity is, Mercy hath prevailed, therefore let favor be shown to the wicked.

Now burdened souls, with all their guilt,  
And all their weight of woe,  
May pardon, at the mercy-seat,  
Find every time they go.

Mercy pleads long, and importunately with the impenitent sinner. But she will not always plead in vain. She knows her appointed bounds, and there she will turn, on insulted wing, and kindle into a tempest of eternal vengeance to sink his sin-polluted soul to the lowest depth of endless perdition.

The King, at his coming, assumed that judicial and legislative authority, previously exercised by others. No sinister motive could have induced him to decline the honor to rule, awarded him by the Father. His administration has been perfectly equitable. He knows no partiality. He wrongs no one, that benefit thereby may accrue to another. His reign is unimpeachable. But to crown all culture, and develop the purest and noblest Christian character, man must heed the commandments, keep the precepts and walk in the statutes of love and

mercy, delivered to us by this Divine Lawgiver. This he can do, only through God's assisting grace.

Nichodemus recognized the King as A GREAT TEACHER SENT FROM HEAVEN to instruct humanity in the way of life. The race was sitting in darkness, and in the shadow of death. Generation after generation, on their way to the tomb, had asked in vain for the way of life. The devotee had urged the inquiry, at the shrine of his idol god; the priest had plead for light at his heathen altar; and the ancient sage had repeated the cry, as he walked amid the works and wonders of creation: but no answer, not even an echo, returned to lighten their pathway, as they journeyed on, through the darkness, toward the regions of death. Ignorance, on this subject, was universal and complete. It had settled down, like a pall, over the face of all lands. Darkness covered the earth, and gross darkness the minds of the people. All things proved the necessity of a Great Teacher, sent from God, to unfold the deep mysteries of life, and lift the hearts of men to a glorious and immortal destiny.

At length this Great Teacher made his appearance, and threw a halo of light and glory over a world, wrapped in gloom, and shrouded in death. He came with lessons of love, laden with heavenly wisdom; and all bore him witness, and marveled at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth; for they were spirit, and they were life. There was a grandeur in his maxims, and a wisdom in his words, such as the world had never known before. He was the world's Greatest Teacher. His instructions did more toward solving the great problems of human life, than all the teachings of earth's philosophers and sages combined. He was also unlike all

other teachers, a living illustration of the truths he taught. He exemplified every lesson he inculcated. He taught no less by example, than by precept. Men of the broadest intellectual culture, in all subsequent ages, have recognized in him the symbol of divine wisdom, and the realized ideal of human perfection.

This Great Teacher adopted a method of instruction, so rich, so rare, and yet so romantic, that thousands thronged to hear his wonderful words of wisdom; and listened with the most intense interest and eagerness to his gracious lessons of life. His teachings were not, as some have insinuated, a mere eclectic system, borrowed from the religious sects and teachers of his day. He was most emphatically the Teacher of teachers. For, when he spoke, the wisest could not answer; neither could the bravest stand before his burning words of wisdom. He silenced alike the great and the small, the illiterate and the learned of earth. For his was not the culture of men, but the wisdom of God. His was the erudition of heaven, not of earth. He was truly a Wonderful Teacher. His grand lessons opened the gates of heaven so wide, at times, that men saw more of its glory in a single moment, than they had ever seen before in all their lives. And yet, in the trivial incidents of life, he often found the most forcible illustrations of moral truths. And, even in some of the innocent amusements of his day, he saw the brightest and best symbols of spiritual life.

But the devotees of a dead religion, crucified and embalmed in its oral traditions, were illy prepared to receive and appreciate the divine originality, and heavenly unction, with which the Spiritual Nazarene instructed them in



the ways of life and salvation. Their sages had no just conception of a religion adapted alike to the wants of all classes, and conditions of humanity. They claimed that the folly of his teachings were patent, in the fact that he sought to introduce one religion for all nations. They thought that the aristocracy of the world would never deign to stoop to a religion, in common with the lower castes of society. But the Great Teacher proclaimed the brotherhood of man, by revealing a common Father, and a similar destiny to the entire race. He taught the world many important truths. But, in the interest and sympathy, which he manifested for all classes, and conditions of humanity; in the spirit of his bearing toward the noble, and the ignoble among men; and above all, in his picture of the great judgment, where race and rank will be unknown, are imbedded some of the grandest lessons of his fruitful life. But all this glorious light was darkness to blinded eyes: and all these living truths were dead to hardened hearts.

The Great Teacher had before him all classes of hearers. He preached to the cold and indifferent, the shallow and impressive, the worldly and ambitious, the aristocratic and luxurious, as well as to the faithful, and fruitful among men. The proud and haughty, he sent to the law of Moses; but the humble and submissive he led to his own Gospel of Grace. The great burden of his teachings was the denunciation of sin, and the promise of pardon. He pointed out a light to console the obedient, and a flame to consume the disobedient. He taught men how to make the best of both worlds. His object was to make every man his own master, and enable him to bring all the faculties of his being into harmony

with the divine will. Truth was the great instrumentality he made use of to transform, purify and elevate the human family. Religious truth was the principal element in all his public instructions. He constantly dealt out unalloyed truth to his large audiences—truths which shook, to their very center, the sandy foundations of the votaries of infidelity. His manner of imparting knowledge has impressed these divine truths upon the great heart of the world. They still sink deep into the souls, and linger long in the memories of all his true, and faithful disciples.

This Great Teacher dealt not with questions of speculative curiosity, but with subjects of the greatest practical, and spiritual import. With many of the ancients, virtue was but the offspring, or outgrowth of nature; and vice, merely the madness of men. Compare the doctrines of moral evil, and human responsibility, as set forth in the teachings of Jesus, with the vague ideas of heathendom, and you will see, at once, the paramount importance of his sacred mission among men. His words were the reality of hope, and the very embodiment of life. None, like him, had ever fathomed the depths of the world's spiritual necessities, or revealed the hidden secrets of life, with such words of fire. The masses recognized in his teachings, the power and inspiration of a life, unknown to the scribes and Pharisees, who followed so scrupulously the traditions of the elders. And the spirit of his Gospel breathes the inspiration of love into our lives, imparts the fullness of hope to our hearts and pours the blessings of heaven into our souls.

Christian friends, Jesus is our Great Teacher, and we

are his humble disciples. The relation we sustain to him, implies a oneness with him in the great work of lifting the church, into a higher and holier life, and the salvation of a lost and ruined world. Our hearts should always beat, in perfect unison, with the sympathetic heart of the Saviour, in his purposes, and plans to rescue the perishing of earth. For we can not afford to negative our professions, by refusing to coöperate with him in any of the labors, or sacrifices necessary to the salvation of souls. We need but follow the instructions, imbibe the spirit and become co-workers with Jesus; and we may go forth to walk and talk with him on earth, as Adam did with God in Paradise, until we step over the border, into a brighter and better land, where we will reign eternally with him in glory.

The King is universally recognized, in the Scriptures, as THE SAVIOUR OF SINNERS. He was the Messiah of the prophets. Ancient prophecy all centered in him, as its Sacrificial Saviour. For centuries the world waited, and watched for the Promised Deliverer. At length he came, with the message of life and salvation. He came to rescue sinners from the vortex into which they had fallen, that they might not be forever lost. He came to pay a debt which he did not owe, to relieve them of a debt they could not pay. He came to save them from a ruin, in which the tempest of sin had involved the world. He came to awaken hope, in the despondent hearts; to kindle life in the souls, and to restore the fallen images of a great God to the lost sinners of a dying world. Jesus carried a world of sorrow in his innocent heart, and the burden of a world's guilt upon his sinless soul, as he marched from the Pretorium to

Golgotha. And the testimony of all the Gospels point to him as the Suffering Saviour of Calvary. Storms of persecution, and floods of sorrow swept over his grief-stricken soul, like a mighty avalanche, as he hung in agonies upon the crimson cross. But he willingly bore all these shameful burdens, that he might bestow upon the world all needed blessings. For the prime object of his merciful mission was to give eternal life to sinners, at the cost of the most humiliating of all deaths—even the death of the cross.

The salvation of sinners is a miracle of mercy. They are saved, only because divine mercy is deeper than human folly. God does not paralyze the wicked hand, palsy the blaspheming tongue, nor blot out of existence those, who refuse him a place in his own universe, simply because he is a God of mercy. He refused once to let the sun shine upon man's greatest sin, to show the world how great his mercy was in sending the Light of Life to those, who so much preferred to walk in the darkness of death. So, mercy is one of the chief attributes of the Saviour of Sinners, through which we have received the blessings of salvation. His mercy brought him, seeking and searching through all the barren wastes of sin and death for the loved, but lost of earth. The presence of the Mighty Healer, and the aid of the Merciful Helper is the only hope of the guilty, and helpless soul. Through his infinite mercy alone, can we hope to receive eternal life. For his mercy is the only refuge for sinners, and the secure citadel for his saints. He enters the heart, sick with sin, and it is his merciful presence, which makes it a place of joy and gladness for evermore.

The Saviour of Sinners is the world's Greatest Benefactor. He brought with him heaven's richest blessing for man. That blessing makes the poorest of earth heirs of a rich and endless inheritance in glory. Jesus proclaimed, to all men, a full and free salvation. The precious truths he uttered have lifted humanity up toward the gates of heaven. He still speaks to the sin-burdened soul with the voice of peace, and the promise of rest; and all within is joy and gladness. A deeper peace, and a much more profound and blessed rest, than this world can ever give, has come to every sin-stricken, and life-seeking sinner, who has laid his heavy burden down, in penitence, at the foot of the cross. The Saviour awakens the triune faculty of faith, hope and love, in every contrite seeker, and sends him forth rejoicing in the pardon of sin, and the power of life. He fills each trusting heart with a faith, which lifts the veil of the unseen world, and reveals the glories of a Heavenly Paradise. He brings back the lost treasure of hope, and with it anchors the redeemed soul to that within the veil. He binds, with the golden cords of love, each believing, hopeful sinner, that the heart of a ransomed world may beat, in happy unison, with the great heart of Infinite Love. Thus he is constantly lifting a dying world up, out of darkness and death, into the light, and blessedness of an endless life.

The Cross of Christ is the hope of the world. It is to humanity what stars are to the night, or rather, what the sun is to the day. The Saviour of Sinners was a man without sin. He knew nothing of the burden of personal guilt, or of the sense of personal pardon. Yet he hung in agonies upon the cross of death, that the



vilest sinners might lay hold upon the crown of life. Without this cross then, the sinner has no Sacrificial Saviour; no Paschal Lamb; and consequently, no hope of heaven. Without this cross, the Christian has no Elder Brother; no Compassionate Intercessor, and hence, no heavenly mansion, in which to repose when the toils, and conflicts of his earthly pilgrimage are passed. Here, the Saviour died, that sinners might live. Here, he also endured the deepest agonies of earth, that ransomed souls might be crowned with eternal glory. Here, he lifted his supplicating voice in prayer, for those who nailed him there. All lives would be worse than hopeless, and all deaths the beginning of endless despair, were it not for the Cross of Calvary. If we desire deeper conviction, more devout penitence, or greater sorrow for sin, we need only come nearer the cross of a Suffering Saviour, where justice and mercy meet, and a Just Judge pardons a guilty sinner. Then as Christians, we should employ all the charms of music, all the fervor of devotion, all the consecration of life and all the power of the pulpit, with which to tell a lost world the sacred story of the consecrated cross. For when reason fails, and warnings are heard in vain; when blessings are spurned, and chastisements are despised; when the hope of heaven no longer allures, and the fear of hell no longer alarms, then the infinite love of the Saviour of Sinners, as seen in his sufferings upon the cross, will often touch the prodigal's heart, unseal the fountain of tears, and bring the wayward wanderer back to his Father's house.

Christ never intended, that any should purchase heaven with good works, or royal gifts. He kindly tendered

life and salvation to all men, without money, and without price, upon the simple condition of faith in him, as their personal Saviour. With such an offer before us, we should not stop one moment to argue the question of acceptance. Living faith should always go before blind reason, when we contemplate spiritual things. It is folly to delay, madness to defer, when the greatest blessings, for time and eternity, may be had for the asking. Especially is this true, when we consider that our eternal destiny may depend upon decisive, and immediate action; since the opportunity for choice may be gone in a moment, and gone forever. Yet, many delay their return for years. Some wait even until the tender feelings, ardent hopes and wakeful conscience of their youthful days are all buried beneath the guilt and sin of a long life, spent in rebellion against the Gracious King. In such hearts, the seed of divine truth seldom finds soil sufficiently congenial to germinate, and spring up into eternal life. But there is some hope for the aged sinner. Truth never loses its divine power. And the King is able to save, even to the uttermost, the very chief of sinners. This is sufficient to inspire us with unbounded confidence in him, as an All-sufficient Saviour. We can not over-estimate, either his power, or willingness to save. Neither can we trust him too soon, nor too implicitly; for he desires nothing else so much, as he does the salvation of sinners.

The King of Glory is THE REDEEMER OF A RANSOMED WORLD. In ancient times, it was the custom to put a redemption price on captives taken in war, and allow their friends to redeem them, if they would. The money given to buy back from prison, and from death, was

called the ransom, or redemption price. The world has been captured, by the powers of darkness. Silver and gold would not redeem a single soul. The redemption price was the blood of the Just. The world must be ransomed, or all would have been lost. So Jesus came to our rescue; and bought us back with his own precious blood. He paid the stipulated price, in heaven's own coinage. He gave himself a ransom for all men. He threw open the prison doors of death to the world, and bade all the prisoners of sin, and sorrow walk out into the courts of his grace, and enjoy the liberty of purchased redemption. None should hesitate a single moment, to accept this proffered liberty. For, could we turn back the hand, on the dial plate of time, to the day, when the King hung in agonies upon the cross, and gaze, with our own eyes, upon the tragic scene, which purchased our redemption; all hearts would doubtless melt, with deepest contrition; all heads become fountains of tears; and all souls embrace, with a most ardent love, the world's Dying Redeemer. How could we remain any longer in cruel bondage to Satan, with bursted bars, opened doors, and dying agonies, all inviting us so cordially, in the name of the Royal Redeemer, to happiness, and to heaven?

The World's Redeemer has a heart to pity, and a soul to sympathize with all classes, and conditions of suffering humaity. His compassionate soul yearns for the deliverance of every sin-fettered captive, who lingers in the land of bondage, from the idle, worthless dude of wealth, to the most wretched, poverty-stricken vagabond, that ever sat beneath the dark canopy of sorrow, or the sable curtains of death. His was truly a mission

of mercy. He came to cheer the hopeless, and lift up the fallen among men. He came to restore the outcast, and pardon the guilty of our race. He came to seek, and to save the lost of earth. His blood was shed for those, who made it flow. His voice was lifted in behalf of those, who silenced it in death. His soul was made an offering for those, who crucified him upon the cross. And he gloried in this merciful mission, which reached even his own foul murderers.

Why did the King redeem us from death, says one, and still leave us to struggle with the weakness of the flesh, and the adversary of souls all the way through life? We answer, because many of the most valuable lessons of life are learned in its darkest trials, and deepest troubles. We must walk on in fear, if we would learn the great lesson of faith. We must journey beneath the shadows of the deepest sorrows, to learn, that all his providential dispensations are but ministers of mercy, to all those who see the bow of promise upon the brow of the darkest clouds, which gather over the pathway of their painful pilgrimage. Again, every trial, patiently borne, adds joy and strength to the humble soul. Every triumphant conflict, with the powers of darkness, increases our courage in the great spiritual warfare. There is no joy like that of the conqueror, who fights against the powers of evil, and gains a victory for himself, and his God. If we would be truly happy, we must learn to suffer patiently, resist manfully and contend nobly in life's great battle. We must free ourselves from the power, and dominion of sin, by fighting our way valiantly to the realms of light and liberty. The self-indulgent, who seek happiness, in shunning

duty, know nothing of the real joy, and exultation of true victory. The crowns of heaven are all reserved for conquerors. The robes of Paradise are all to be worn by soldiers. The heavenly mansions await the weary reapers, who will return with great joy, bringing their sheaves with them to glory.

Though infinitely compassionate, the Great Redeemer never promised to ward off the stroke of affliction, even from those who walk closest to him, through all the dark pilgrimage of life. He says to all his followers, In this world ye shall have tribulations. His promises of unalloyed happiness, all point, through the gateway of darkness and death, to the mansions of light and life. Yea more! he often sends the dark nights, and long winters of trial, trouble and tribulation upon us, that all the Christian graces, and heavenly virtues of our holy religion may be developed and strengthened, the more beautifully to adorn our saintly characters. We must not conclude then, that the Infinite Redeemer has forgotten us, because we fail to recognize his divine presence, in all the dark hours of peril, temptation and bereavement. We need not desire to see, at all times, the Helping Hand, which guides our feet, and guards our way. It is enough for us to know, that we are fighting under the King's banner of love; that we are sailing on the old ship of Zion, with the Captain of our Salvation at her helm; and we will look back after a while, from the broad, sunlit hills of heaven, upon the dangers, storms and conflicts, through which we have passed, with all our regrets lost in gratitude and love for him, who has manifested his own power and glory, in our timely deliverance. We will all have to hum, occasion-



ally, the song of sorrow here ; but it will only tune our hearts, with sweeter harmony, and enable us to sing, with deeper joys, the songs of redemption hereafter. Those who walk through the fiery furnace of affliction, hoping against hope, or sit down in the house of mourning shedding tears which water their own hearts, will finally be led forth by the hand of a Merciful Redeemer, into the light, and gladness of a heavenly day. Then the long and happy day which we shall spend in heaven will be brighter and better, because we have found so much night, in our earthly pilgrimage.

This great redemption work, shall be carried on, until the vices and vulgarities of the world have all vanished. Then truth shall speak forth from every lip, virtue adorn every life, and peace find lodgement in every heart. This Regal Redeemer of the world will actually accomplish every thing foreshadowed in the law, and predicted by the prophets concerning his wonderful redemption reign. He has already set up the sign of redemption on earth ; placed the ensigns of his glory in the heavens, and waved the bloody banner of the cross in victory, at the very gates of hell. And he will push forward the victories of the cross, until all the powers of darkness are forever subdued ; the redemption of both our souls and bodies are finally complete, and then he will reign, as King of Saints, eternally in glory.

The King represented himself to the Revelator, as THE MORNING STAR OF THE MORAL WORLD, shining forth in beauty and grandeur, from the heavens of his own infinite love. This then is the last, and in some respects the most striking figure the Saviour ever used, in revealing himself to a dark and benighted world. His

humble advent was but the falling of the first soft beams of light, from this bright Morning Star, upon the sable darkness of a long moral night to humanity. For a time, this Beautiful Star hung low in its golden orbit. Sometimes its mellow light was well nigh obscured; and again, its radiant splendors trailed in the dust. The Young King shed his light gradually, like the light of the morning, upon the benighted pathway of human life, shaded with the sombre curtains of death, until he eventually ushered in the glories of a brighter, and better day to sinning, and suffering humanity. For the Star, which once shone in humble obscurity, now leads the shining hosts of heaven, as the Chief among ten thousand, and the One altogether lovely.

Many brilliant stars have risen, and shone with effulgent glory for a time, upon benighted humanity: but this brightly beaming Morning Star rises far above all others, and continues to shine with ever-increasing glory, while they pale, and fade from our moral vision. While on earth, Jesus was separate from sinners in his thoughts, feelings and affections. He was spotless, and without guile. He stood alone, in the moral world. Now he dwells apart, in his lofty purity. He has become a permanent Polar Star, in the heavens of our faith. Like the star of the morning, ever beautiful and bright, he is shining silently, and alone, in the spiritual heavens, while all other stars have grown dim, and faded from our lingering view.

This Morning Star speaks of the changeless sympathy, and undying affection of our King of Love. It stands as a pledge for the future—an everlasting security for all ages. In the darkest hours of our darkest nights, its

burning beams of light fall upon our souls, inspiring them with the hope of immortality, and eternal life. This Friendly Star moves on, in its matchless career of sympathy, and love, through all the storms, and conflicts of this mortal life, always pointing way-worn pilgrims to a land of rest—a home in heaven. It is the Sure Herald of an endless day. This is the ebon night of mortality. Death is all around us. The earth stands thick with tombs. Millions are annually marching on toward the grave. But, high above this dead, and dying world, serenely beams the bright Morning Star of hope, Sweet Harbinger of an eternal day.

Watchman, what of the night? Tell us what its signs of promise are. The morning dawneth; day is breaking, and the light of life is bursting, in floods of glory, upon a benighted world. The Morning Star is already far above the Eastern horizon, and begins to shine with matchless power, and great glory, upon the oriental world. The precious name of King Jesus is already peerless in power, among the greatest forces of earth. Universal dominion is inscribed upon the snowy folds of his cross-banner; and the petty kingdoms of this world are being rapidly added to the growing empire of the King of Glory. The gentle light, of this steadily Rising Star, is already melting away, into the azure dawn of an eternal day. The earth, with all its darkness and death, is quietly receding; and heaven, with all its light and life, is gradually bursting in upon our enraptured vision. The darkness, of mortality's long night, is rapidly giving way, to the glorious light of an endless immortality.

Malachi hailed the King, as THE SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, rising, with healing in his beams, upon all the

nations of the earth. Life was on the wane. The light in men was darkness intensified. The world was mantled with night, and shrouded in death. Little suns hung low, in their humble orbits, like lamps of glory on the battlements of heaven; while still lesser lights spangled the dark vault of ignorance and superstition, for four thousand years. The world waited, and watched for the ushering in of a holier and happier day. At length the morning dawned, in all its beauty and loveliness. The King unfolded the vision of his glory, with such royal magnificence, that all other lights were completely eclipsed, in the radiance of his dazzling splendors. The Sun of Righteousness arose, in power and great glory. Darkness fled, pursued by the rays of divine light, until the night of death was soon lost in the day of life, and immortality brought to light in the Gospel of Jesus.

Life is still diversified, with sunshine and shadows. One moment is full of light and the next darkened with clouds. To-day we live in the light of hope; but to-morrow grope our way in the darkness of despair. This week we are basking in the balmy summer of life, but the next finds us silent in the chilly winter of death. The darkest nights of grief, often follow the lightest days of earthly joy. The shadows of eternity, often fall across the brightest paths of time. And the angel of death, often darkens the threshold of the happiest homes on earth. How important it is then, that we have a Sun of Righteousness beneath whose genial rays we may warm our hearts, and vitalize our souls, for the fearful struggles of life and the solemn realities of death. If we would let our feeble lights, with their borrowed rays, so shine, as to illuminate our own path-

ways, and shed a mellow radiance upon those around us, we must walk in the sacred precincts of this Sun of Righteousness, which is destined to drive back the darkness of a dismal night, and flood the world with the glories of a perfect day. It will make radiant, with its divine glories, all lands, from East to West, and encircle the earth, from pole to pole, with its heavenly beams of light and life. For it is the Sun of Mercy, and the Light of the World.

A Light, which is the life of men, has come to us, from the eternal world. And we can well afford to dispense with the torch-light of reason, and all other minor lights, unless we prefer the flickering rays of tapers, to the splendors of a cloudless sun. This Sun of Righteousness rose with healing in his beams, that the blind of earth might see, and the dead live through all eternity. It finds the sinner sitting in the valley and shadow of death, or wandering in this world of woe, and lights him back, through its golden gates, unto the heaven of endless glory. The prisoners of darkness, and the victims of death hear the footfalls of the Humble King, as he passes by their lowly dungeons, and follow him forth into the broad sunlight of an endless day, and a glorious destiny. The iron doors, of the dark kingdom of death, are thrown open everywhere; the light of the glorious Sun of Righteousness shines in, and the inviting voice of the Prince of Life sounds through all its cells of sorrow, and the dead awake to live for evermore. The sinner, upon whose benighted soul the first ray of light has just flashed, bringing with it the gift and evidence of eternal life, feels like he was basking in the very sunshine of the King's eternal glory. His happy soul is



full of light and love, and he rejoices that the King has set up his throne in the heart for a peaceful, glorious and endless reign. Upon all such, this Sun of Righteousness rises, and shines forever in glory.

Paul speaks of Christ, as THE KING OF KINGS, and Lord of lords. And Jesus himself said, in answer to Pilate's inquiry, Thou sayest that I am a King; to this end was I born, and for this purpose came I into the world. His silent bearing indicated, that he was born to command; and his graceful movements betrayed, at every step, the majesty of a King. Infinite Majesty had never before assumed the form, and functions of a servant. Royalty had never before stood, and knocked, without invitation, at the doors of rebellious hearts, seeking peaceful admission, through its own voluntary sacrifices. But this Humble Nazarene, of the Gospels, was a King of kings, the sceptre of whose power is supreme, over both the seen, and the unseen world. His dominion is universal. It includes the petty domains of all other kings and potentates. And none can go beyond the sound of his commanding voice, or compass the reach of his regal power. In the person of Jesus Christ, there was nobility of thought; grandeur of character, and a moral worth, before which heaven and earth were forced to pause, and bow in reverence and adoration. For, during the thirty years in which he walked the earth in humility, he was but a King in Disguise, greater than all the kings of his race. He was, most emphatically, the King of kings, and Lord of lords.

The great events, in the earthly career of their Honored King, were matters of paramount importance to the hosts of heaven. Holy angels loved to trace the

steps; listen to the words, and witness the deeds of this Mighty King, whose heavenly glory was veiled beneath the garb of a Galilean Peasant. The places where he was born, lived, labored, suffered and died are all enshrined forever in the memories of those vigilant visitants, and inscribed indelibly upon the lasting records of heaven.

Jesus was born King of the Jews. He was the Legitimate Heir to Israel's throne. But the Jews rejected their Worthy King. They were wedded to their formalities. Their religious system had made them slaves to the letter, but strangers to the spirit of their law. But after all, it is easier for the carnal mind to obey the letter, than to submit to the spirit. It is quite easy to be cold and haughty; but rather difficult to be humble and spiritual. It is one thing to be a bigoted formalist, but quite a different thing to be an humble, and obedient subject of the meek and Lowly King. While the Kind-hearted King was rejected by the scribes, he was worshiped by the publicans. While the Pharisees despised him, he was adored by sinners. And while he was persecuted by those in authority, even unto death, he was revered, and loved devotedly by many of their subjects. The Jews expected, in the person of their Messiah, a great earthly king, whose regal majesty and power would be overwhelming to the nations. They preferred a mighty monarch, with a conquering army, to the Despised Nazarene with his cross of agonies. Hence they took no cognizance of his kingship, save to deny his right to reign, and lead him to the cross, rather than honor him with a crown.

The King is the Arbiter of human destiny. He

looked into the eyes, and read, with ease, the most profound secrets of all hearts. He viewed the hearts, and revealed, most accurately, the destiny of all souls. It was not necessary for him to wave a wand, utter a meaningless incantation, watch the moving stars, listen to the moaning winds or roaring waters to find out the secrets of human destiny, or to convince the most illiterate, that he had power over the unseen world. Unlike heathen priests, he had only to speak the word, and his divine power was manifest to all men. Nor was the King of kings ignorant of his own destiny. He saw the end, from the beginning. He knew that he must pass under the rod, and over the cross, to reach the crown. He was perfectly conscious of the shame and agonies, which lay in his pathway to glory. He often contemplated the sad scenes of Calvary, in contrast with the lifting up of the everlasting gates, and the ascension of his Father's throne, where he would reign forever, as King of kings, and Lord of lords.

The King of kings can justly claim the services of all hands, and the homage of all hearts. For he acquainted himself with our griefs, and bore all our sorrows, that we might behold his crown, and share his glory. The travail of his soul was for the salvation of men. The agonies of his death were the yearnings of infinite love, and the struggles of infinite power to reclaim the wandering, and rescue the lost. His whole life, through all its mysterious sufferings and sacrifices, was but one prolonged, and awful drama, which ought to move the world to tears, and win all hearts for the Crucified King. The closing scenes of Calvary, alone, ought to conquer the world, with its kings and its king-

doms, for Jesus. Because the billows of woe, upon the great ocean of human grief, all sink to rest, when compared with the dying agonies of the King upon the cross.

The kings of earth, by force, and the force of circumstances, have founded great kingdoms among men. But the King of Glory has established upon the pure principles of love, the greatest, and grandest empire the world has ever known. Millions of his happy subjects live, and if needs be; would die for the honor of their Gracious King. He conquered them by love; and holds them, in willing obeisance, by the same means. When once converted, the soul is brought into perfect harmony with the will of the Supreme King. He directs the ways, controls the thoughts and governs the passions of his subjects. He draws them to, and incorporates them into himself, through the strong cords of his undying love. Their souls are charged with the electric force of his holy religion, and they are no longer their own sovereigns, but willingly bow, in sweet and loving subjection, to the King of kings and Lord of lords. But in his absolute sovereignty, the sole object, of the Adorable King, is the present and future happiness of these most obedient, of all subjects, and his own eternal glory.

Fidelity then, upon the part of his subjects, is what the King demands. This, we can well afford to give. For, marching under his banner, we are perfectly safe; following his counsels, we are always right, and fighting his battles, we are sure to be brought off more than conquerors in the final conflict. Let us go do the King's bidding then; and our influence for good will deepen

and widen, so long as there is a soul to be saved, in this wide world of ours. It may be small, at first, but it will prove powerful in the end. A pebble is dropped in the water, and the circlets of its waves reach the most distant shores of the oval ocean. A little bird wings its way through the air, and sets in motion a force, which is felt around the earth, and among the stars. So every act of obedience, to Heaven's King, starts a wave of light, and joy, and gladness, which shall roll on through endless ages. In the King's service, every faithful effort will be rewarded with success, and every valiant struggle crowned with victory. The memorial, of all who offer their sacrifices upon the altar of faith and love, will ever be held in grateful remembrance, by the King of Saints. And every soldier of the cross, who proves his fidelity, shall be awarded a crown of righteousness, and shall reign forever, with the King of kings, as a prince and priest in the kingdom of glory.





# THE MINISTRY OF THE KING.

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## CHAPTER VII.

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*But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry.*—HEB. 8: 6.

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The public ministry of the King began when he was thirty, and lasted only three years. It was full of lights and shadows. It was diversified with sunshine and showers. It was lulled into calms, and swept by storms. These three years were the most eventful upon record. They were fraught with the richest benedictions of heaven. They were pregnant with the greatest blessings for humanity. And they were replete with the grandest exhibitions of the King's goodness, grace and mercy. This ministry is, very naturally, divided into his words, his works and his ways. These constitute the rich legacy, which the King has left to the world. And they ought to be studied, appreciated and imitated by all men. Under these three headings, we propose to compass, in this chapter, the most important events in the King's ministerial life.

THE WORDS OF THE KING were many, and precious. Only a small fractional part of them were left upon record. But those we have are the embodiment of wisdom and power. They are transcendent, and immortal. They are spirit, and they are life. They burn their way to the very core of our hearts. They sink deep into our

inmost souls. They are the power of God unto salvation, to every believing sinner. These words of life are our richest treasure. They came burdened with the offers of salvation, and the promises of heaven. They are our most sacred trust. We should guard them as the apples of our eyes, even until death. They are the best weapons of our spiritual warfare. We should wield them effectually in every battle of life. To this end, our heads, and our hearts, all ought to be full of them. But it is ours to send these precious words out, in their divine potency, that all men may hear the King's call of mercy, and accept his tender of life and salvation.

In these immortal words, of the King, lay hidden all the riches of wisdom; all the graces of culture, and all the sacred beatitudes, with which human society has since been blessed. When Jesus spoke, his object was, not to amuse and entertain, but to edify and save. His messages of love always carried with them, the sacred fire of a soul burning with the most fervid zeal, and in sore travail for the salvation of sinners. These holy words of wisdom and grace, which dropped fresh from his sacred lips, while on his mission of mercy, among mortal men, were the grandest that ever saluted human ears, and the sweetest that ever found lodgement in human hearts. The very simplicity of the sacred stories, in which he embodied these grand truths, and through which he communicated such important lessons, kindled the imaginations, fired the hearts and burned their way into the very souls of his humble and honest auditors.

The King's voice had in it more than man's power, mingled with more than woman's tenderness. It was strong enough, for thousands to hear his wonderful

words, and yet gentle enough, to catch the infant's ear, and ravish, with its sweetness, the tenderest heart. The divine grace of the Gentle Speaker, gave him a strange mastery over the multitudes, who followed him, and listened, with throbbing hearts, to his words of weight and wisdom. He wore the air of a calm and exalted superiority ; but the least expression, of tenderness and sympathy, drew all honest hearts around him, in submission and admiration. His voice was the key-note to the meaning of his every message of mercy. Such stern, and stubborn facts, clothed with such gracious, and loving words, never fell from human lips before.

Jesus spoke, as never man spake. He spoke, as one having divine authority, even the authority of a Universal King, who speaks without the least restraint, and with a perfect right to demand universal obedience. Jesus was a young man, but he spoke with higher authority, greater grace and more wisdom than all the ancients combined. Never did a mere human teacher, mingle such meekness and majesty in his person ; never did an earthly sage, dwell upon so lofty a theme, with such a lowly spirit ; and never did holy prophet, pour out the burden, or joy of ages and nations, in such humble yet exalted strains, as did the Majestic Messiah manifest, in delivering the truths of his own everlasting Gospel to the world. The King clothed his language with such authority, as the wisest, and best of earth had never assumed. But still he spoke, with deepest humility, the words of life and salvation. These words, at once so simple and sublime, must have been all they purported to be, the words of a God-man.

The King also clothed his gracious words with the

incidents, and surroundings of a daily life full of simplicity, industry and frugality. This gave them a peculiar interest to the common people, who could the more readily comprehend, and the better appreciate their valuable lessons. These heavenly words were like the dew of the morning, falling in blessings upon the tender hearts of the poor, meek and merciful, who heard him so often, and so gladly. See the King of Heaven, in the bow of the rocking ship, teaching the thronging crowds upon the sea shore! How calm! how condescending! how patient! He bears with the rude, pities the ignorant and instructs the gathering multitudes. They catch the tone of his persuasive, and commanding voice, and wonder at the sweetness and grace, the wisdom and power of the heavenly words, which fall from his loving lips. They listen, with longing, for the living water and bread of life, which these words set before them, in such bounty, and with such liberality upon the part of the King. No matter when, or where he taught, by the seaside, in the synagogue, or on the mountain top, he always spoke the words of eternal life, in such a way that the common people heard him gladly. The manner of the King exerted a wonderful influence upon his audiences. It repelled the rude and vicious, but invited the timid and distrustful. It often silenced the harsh voice of censure among his enemies and inspired the sweet notes of praise, in the ranks of his followers.

These words, spoken by the King, are universally acknowledged to be the most potent ever uttered by mortal man, or heard by mortal ear. Wherever repeated, they have carried light into dark homes, kindled hope in desponding hearts, and given victory and life

to dying souls. These precious words of Jesus still live, and will live on, speaking the same life-giving truths, so long as the world shall stand. They were spoken by a voice which must be heard, and should be heeded by all men. They address our understandings, and reasoning faculties, with arguments, and evidences of infinite power. They quicken our consciences with an awful sense of violated law, and the fearful forebodings of divine retribution. They over-awe our souls with the sad solemnities of death and the dreadful realities of eternity. Jesus always had words of approval and encouragement, for the faithful and obedient, which girded up the loins, and strengthened the hearts of his disciples. He also had words of rebuke and warning, for the disobedient and rebellions, which fell, with ponderous weight, upon the souls of the wicked, often silencing the audacity, and blasphemy of his bitterest enemies. Though these words were all barbed arrows, in the hearts of the King's enemies; yet they were spoken in deepest sympathy, and divine love for the sinner. They breathed forth the devotion of a true and faithful Friend to all men. One who sealed the sincerity of his appeals to sinners, with the testimony of his dying love upon the rugged cross.

The King discoursed to the people, as the Author, and Founder of the Gospel of Grace. When he spoke, the eyes of all were fastened upon him. His tone of voice was so natural; his thoughts so clear and comprehensive; his words so simple and significant, and his doctrines so different from those of the Rabbis and rulers of Israel, whose hard theological, or ritualistic discussions were so stale and technical, that all the people



testified, saying, This man speaks, as never man spake before. The great Preacher of Israel was an earnest speaker. His resistless eloquence charmed even his enemies, until many of them quailed and cowered, under his severe reprimands. He met all the real issues of life, like a Moral Hero; and grappled with all its profound problems, like a Master Philosopher. The pointed truths he uttered, cut their way to the very heart's core. His method of sermonizing was far in advance of the modern idea. There was nothing in his discourses to provoke a smile, much less to create laughter. He preached humility, forgiveness and universal charity. This raised up against him, a host of bitter enemies, who treated him as a vile impostor. But his words of warning were still stern and unyielding, though always seasoned with grace, and laden with the promises of life. Among the great preachers and benefactors of the world, there are none to be compared with Jesus. In the wake of his Gospel, learning and intellect have supplanted ignorance and superstition: morality and refinement have superseded vice and degradation; and spirituality and godliness have conquered beastliness and fiendishness. And his church is mother to all the great institutions, which to-day bless and honor the world.

The principle upon which the King interpreted Scripture was so new, so profound and so luminous, that it completely confounded the wisest of his most bitter enemies, while it filled, with rapture and delight, the loving hearts of his devoted disciples. His divine wisdom poured floods of light over the sacred pages of Inspiration, for humanity. And his interpretations ought to teach us, at least this one important lesson, that wher-

ever we find a mysterious passage, the most simple, and comprehensive interpretation is likely to be the truest, and the best exegesis of his inspired words. His instructions were rich with metaphors, maxims and parables of general, as well as personal application. All his words were laden with important lessons, for those to whom they were addressed. But many of them have a broader, and deeper meaning, in their universal application to humanity. And it is when we make these general applications, that our own cases are reached; our hearts stirred within us, and our lives molded into harmony with heaven, through the power of his cogent words.

The King spoke, not with the voice of erudition, but with the cogency of divine inspiration. He whispered words of peace and hope, to all hearts heavy with grief, and burdened with fears. These silent whisperings, of the King, were heard farther, and lingered longer in the hearts of his people, than the loudest vociferations of the devotees of infidelity, in all their vain opposition to his mission of mercy in the world. His was not the mere utterance of a man, which died away with the last faint echo, that fell back from the mountain slopes: but the wisdom of a God, which swept on down through the centuries, purifying, and adorning the lives of millions of the noblest, and best men and women, who ever lived on earth.

Jesus went, from town to town, and from city to city, teaching the people the way of life and salvation, most perfectly. The vast multitudes were anxious to listen and learn, at the feet of the Divine Instructor. They were perfectly delighted; and, in silent but rapt devo-

tion, they drank in the precious truths, which he brought them from heaven. The sequel of his ministry shows, that those who received his words, into good and honest hearts, were made glad unto salvation; while those who willfully rejected the truth went away, exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death. Just so shall it ever be. The rejectors, of life, shall depart, without any hope of heaven. But, infinitely bountiful will be the harvest of riches and honor, which shall follow the faithful reception of his precious words, even by the least, and lowest of the sons of men.

Such doctrines as the King promulgated, illustrated, as they were, by his own perfect life, and crowned by his own triumphant death, could but exert a powerful influence for good in the world. The inherent dignity of manhood, the common brotherhood of men, and the universal Fatherhood of God, as taught by Jesus Christ, were among the many important lessons which he gave to humanity. His divine injunctions were such, as even the cold, selfish money changers could not resist, when he used the scourge of cords, in driving them from the Holy Temple. His words of authority were irresistible. They hushed the storm, healed the sick, awoke the dead and cast out devils.

Pontius Pilate said of the King, A young man appeared in Galilee preaching with a noble unction, a new law, in the name of the gods that sent him. Never have I heard in the Pettico, nor read in the works of the philosophers any thing to compare with the maxims of Jesus. It was on account of the wisdom of his sayings that I granted so much liberty to the Nazarene. I extended to him my protection unknown, perhaps, to him-

self. He was at liberty to act, speak, assemble and address the people; and also to choose disciples, unrestrained by any Pretorian mandate. But this unlimited freedom granted to Jesus provoked the Jews; not the poor, but the rich and the powerful. It is true that Jesus was severe on the latter; and this was a political reason, in my opinion, not to restrain the liberty of the Nazarene. To the scribes and Pharisees, he would say, You are a race of vipers; you resemble painted sepulchres. Pilate also passed this compliment upon Jesus to his face: Your words are those of a sage. I know not whether you have read Socrates or Plato, but this I do know, there is in your discourses a majestic simplicity that elevates you far above these philosophers. He afterwards said to Herod, that Jesus appeared to be one of those great philosophers that great nations sometimes produce. His doctrines are by no means sacrilegious, and the instruction of Rome is to leave him to that liberty of speech which is justified by his actions.

But the people, among whom the King grew up, and to whom he ministered, were a peculiar people. They differed in many respects, from all other nationalities. The spirit, opinions and customs which prevailed, and influenced them, in their social, political and religious life, were largely peculiar to themselves. The Judaism of his day was especially peculiar. It had substituted empty forms, and senseless ceremonies, for truth and righteousness. Their religion had been reduced to a formalism, in which there was neither legality, loyalty or love. It was a ritualism which reached its culmination, when it virtually assumed to be the whole of religion, and slew the King of Glory, because he witnessed against it dead,

and damning formalities. The dense clouds along its political horizon ; the mighty wreck of its sacred institutions, and the general growth of corruption had already broken up the great deep of Jewish society. Even the holy priesthood had lost its wonted purity, and fallen a prey to Idumean tetrarchs, and Roman procurators. The great Jewish Sanhedrim was under the influence of the wily Saducees, and the wicked Herodians. So nothing was left the truly pious Israelites, but increased fidelity to the Law of Moses, a longing desire for, and a hearty reception of the Messiah of Israel, at his coming. In this strange life, the Humble Nazarene, during his public ministry, was the Central Figure, to which all others were subordinate. When he commanded, they were forced to obey. His powerful words of condemnation, burned their way to all hearts, and riveted deep and pungent conviction upon many souls.

In the parable of the King's great banquet, Jesus taught the haughty scribes, and selfish Pharisees, that God, in his divine displeasure, had rejected them and theirs, and sent his servants out into the highways and hedges, among the poor and destitute, even among the Gentiles, to seek worthy guests for the great Gospel Feast, which he had come to spread out before all men. He taught them that it was one thing to be invited ; but another thing entirely to accept the Gospel invitation, in the proper spirit. He told them plainly, that many were called, but few were chosen.

The King, unheralded by friend or foe, six months before his crucifixion, appeared, in the midst of the great Feast of Tabernacles, and began to teach the vast multitudes of Israel, in the Holy Temple at Jerusalem.



When the great Jewish Sanhedrim were informed by their emissaries of his presence, they watched, with malignant hatred, and jealous hearts, all his merciful movements among the multitudes. But, on the last days of the great feast, they sent officers to arrest him, while he taught the people, in the Holy Temple. The soldiers entered the Temple, and stopped a moment, to listen at the words of the Hated King. They soon felt, that there was a guilty distance between them and the Humble Speaker. Hearing his powerful words, they became powerless; and could not fulfill their merciless mission. Their strength was paralyzed, their courage lost and their wills subdued by a force infinitely more potent than their own. The sacred spell completely disarmed them. And they returned to the authorities, with this strange apology, for not having carried out their orders: Never man spake like this man. After tantalizing the timidity of the soldiery, and ignoring the justice of Nichodemus' wise suggestion, the defeated Council condemned the Innocent Saviour without trial, and adjourned *sine die*. They went to their homes, and Jesus withdrew to the Mount of Olives. But early the next morning, Jesus returned to the Holy Temple, sat down and taught all the people. So it was, wherever the King went, his words attracted the multitudes; the scribes read the law with but few to listen; the priests were left almost alone, at their evening sacrifices, and the rulers were the more enraged, and determined to put him to death, because of his wonderful words.

THE WORKS OF THE KING were wonderful, and divine. All he did was not left upon record. It was too voluminous. His mighty works constitute an important

part of his great mission to humanity. His miracles of mercy stamp, with the seal of heaven, the divine mission of the Merciful Messiah. One of the grandest eulogies ever passed upon the Beneficent Saviour, was couched in these few short words: He went about doing good. His life-work was one grand, harmonious effort to lift the human family up to a higher, and a holier plain of being. In unison with the deepest experiences of human nature, and in concord with the loftiest sentiments of the human soul, he lived and labored to this worthy end. From every solitary retreat, from every sweet communion with the Father, he came forth with deeper sympathy for the sinning, and suffering: and with renewed strength to succor, and to save the lowly, and the lost. His was a noble work, most nobly done. He did not sit down in the cool shade, and while away the golden moments of his precious life, while duty was left undone. He was always up and doing, with a will, the work which the Father had given him to do. And even those, who denied his miraculous gift, could not face the force, or repel the power of many of his mighty works. So, the moments which crown us, with worthily achieved victories, are the most active, and consequently, the sweetest, and happiest moments of our Christian pilgrimage.

One of the most important works the King did, while in the flesh, was the selecting, instructing and commissioning of the twelve apostles to preach his glorious Gospel. For this important work, he chose poor, illiterate fisherman, who had spent their days steering their crafts over the dark waters of Gennesaret, and gathering the prey from their dripping nets, on the sea-shore.

But these men, so simple, but so significant in life, were men of experience. They were accustomed to hardships. They were men of principle and integrity. They were also great in soul, and rich in love for the Master. There was but one exception to these general statements. At the same time they represented almost every shade of human character, from the confident Peter to the doubting Thomas; and every phase of discipleship, from the loving John to the treacherous Judas. But Jesus saw, beneath the rough exterior of these uncultured men, the weight, and worth of unpolished diamonds. So the King often passes by the rich young man, with his refinement and culture, and lays his hand lovingly upon the head of the poor widow's son, in his poverty and illiteracy, and says, Go preach my Gospel. Jesus knew, these hardy fishermen would one day shine forth, with unsurpassing splendors; and hence he loved them, in anticipation of their future devotion, and usefulness in his service. He was not disappointed. In the midst of darkness and death, they hugged to their bosom, the closer, a religion, the principles and promises of which spoke to them, only of persecutions to be encountered, and sufferings to be endured in this world; but of eternal life, and boundless glory in the world to come. They walked hard in the footsteps, which he had left them; ever preaching his Gospel, and constantly glorying in his cross, until their consecration to his service was sealed, with their own precious blood. Jesus was perfectly devoted to these apostles. He was identified with them in all their struggles, their sorrows and their joys. He was at home in both the sad, and sunny experiences of their lives. He exerted, at all times, a

powerful influence, for good, over their minds. He entrenched himself, most lovingly, into their hearts. He ever unified their purposes, and harmonized their efforts, in the great work of saving souls. So Jesus is interested in, and identified with, all his faithful ministering servants to-day. We are all co-laborers, with him, in the great, and grand work of saving a lost and ruined world.

The King never makes any mistakes, in his calls for laborers in his vineyard. If he prefers a young lad like David, to a kingly man like Saul, it is no evidence of a blunder. He calls men exactly suited to the work he has for them to do, with all its surroundings and circumstances. The life-work, assigned each one of us, is just where we can do the most, and the best service for the King. And there is just enough time given us, to do our work well, with none to throw away. With time and talents, and opportunities all devoted to the King's service, we will do our work nobly; and the reward of our labor will be given us, increased seven-fold. When the King calls his servants to reckon with them, it will be a sad day, indeed, for those who have nothing, but buried talents, wasted time and neglected opportunities to set before him. But, forever happy, those who have toiled long, and labored faithfully in the Lord's vineyard. To them rest will be sweet, and heaven eternal happiness.

The life-actions of the King were always in perfect harmony with the sacred mission, upon which he came into the world. Every act of his noble, self-sacrificing life was in sweetest concord with the scenes, in which he was the Principal Character. There was the most per-

fect agreement between the conduct of the Great Actor and the sacred stage, upon which he acted the great drama of his most eventful life. The happy harmonies, of this grand life, bring with them many important lessons to humanity. They teach us, that there should always be perfect harmony between the conduct, and calling of men. They warn us against the inconsistencies, and improprieties of a cold, formal profession of religion. They admonish us to act nobly and grandly our part in the Christian life. And they beckon us onward and upward, in the full development of all the Gospel graces, in happy harmony with the scenes, and surroundings of that glorious kingdom, into which the King hath called us, to act our part in the great spiritual warfare, through which we are passing. Christians who learn these grand lessons, and live worthy of their chaste surroundings, become pillars of strength and towers of glory in this kingdom of grace. Their footsteps track close upon the Highway of Holiness. Their reminiscences of the past are kindred to the joys of the future. With them, no discordant notes ever mar the melodies of heaven. But those who fail to learn these all-important lessons will find, all along the line of their individual lives, a constant discord between their life-actions, and the grand scenes in which they are called to play their parts on the stage of human existence. Yes, the glorious places of our life-actions, as members of his dual kingdom, demand the most thorough consecration of every thing, upon the part of all his subjects, to the King of Glory.

The King, at one time, rescued his disciples from the jaws of death. They were crossing the placid sea of



Galilee. Night came on, and with the darkness came peril and storm. The great deep of little Gennesaret was broken up. The maddened billows ran mountain high. Their little ship rocked, like a drifting bubble riding on the rolling waves. The disciples had already seen, in these dark, wicked waves, the winding-sheets for their watery graves; and heard in these surging, senseless billows, the death-knell, as they thought, of all their earthly hopes. But, in this hour of peril and storm, Jesus came walking, in majesty, upon the watery waves, to perform one of his most wonderful works. The King of the troubled sea, over which she was riding, amid the buffeting billows, was soon at the helm of the trembling little barque. In the blackness of the night, and through the darkness of the storm shone the glory of the Coming Deliverer, whose foot-prints were left upon the waves and whose commanding voice sounded out over the watery waste, speaking peace to the burdened billows of the surging sea. In the midst of this mighty commotion, the King of Storms said to wild Gennesaret, Peace, be still, and there was a great calm. The angry billows were hushed into silence. The rocking ship glided smoothly on to the desired haven. And the sea-sick mariners were soon in their homes again, happy in relating to loved ones the perils of the past night, with its wonderful deliverance from the raging tempest.

Life is but a sea, with its endless diversity of joys and sorrows, clouds and sunshine, calms and storms, over which humanity is making its perilous voyage, from the cradle to the grave. The vessels on which we sail are hurried on, in their silent courses, as swiftly as the flight

of time can move them ; and they will land us, ere long, upon the unknown shores of eternity. The frail barques, upon which we have launched, are both beautiful, and lovely. And they glide gently, but rapidly down the silvery stream of time. They seem self-moved, but are drawn by the golden, swift-winged moments of an hour. These little life-boats, in which we have embarked, are liable, at any time, to be driven by the fearful tempests of grief and sorrow, or tossed by the cruel storms of adversity and despair upon the unknown, and fatal rocks of the mysterious deep, over which we are sailing so rapidly. We are all out upon this uncertain sea of life. The currents of time are bearing us all, on our voyage, rapidly through the perils of the deep. There is no stay of time, or check of tide to those whose sails are set for the eternal shores. Onward, over the dangerous sea of life, across the dark river of death, we hasten to our fate, or fortune, beyond the tossing tempests of time. We should therefore study well the perils, and safeguards of our life-voyage through the earth. In all the calms, and storms of life, we should keep our bearing, and hold our course well for the Port of Peace, until we pass beyond the shadows of the tempests, and enter the haven of an endless life. For we are all sailing, either for the blessed harbor, where we will anchor safely in the haven of eternal rest, or else we are drifting recklessly among the breakers, doomed to sink, for want of a sure anchor, amidst the perils of storm and tempest, to rise no more forever.

If we would make ours a successful voyage, and reach, at length, the desired haven, in triumph, we must lash our life-boats to, and board the Old Ship of Zion. The

Captain of our Salvation must pilot us safely over the dangerous sea of time. The angry elements above, and the strong currents beneath would soon dash our frail barques to ruin, upon the hidden rocks of time, were it not for the infinite wisdom, and power of our Great Pilot. But those who sail on the Old Ship of Zion, guided as she is by the Master Pilot of the seas, need fear no evil. For they may always hear his welcome voice, as he sounds the depth over which they sail, through the sunshine, and shadows of their variable voyage. They may also feel his gentle touch, as he casts the steadfast anchor of hope, amid the storms of death, to stay their vessel from shipwreck, as they near the rocky shores of eternity. See the tried and true Old Ship! Her gallant prow is set towards the mansions of light and life. She is making rapid strides for the Port of Peace. The King of Glory is at her helm, and a successful voyage is inevitable. She is nearing the shores of the better land. She rides triumphantly into the haven at last, amid the welcome hosannas of angels, and the loud hallelujahs of the redeemed. Joy ineffable! Glory infinite and eternal! Farewell sin and sorrow! earth and time, adieu! Welcome, thrice, and forever welcome the scenes of beauty, and the sense of life, which crown our beings with endless, and immortal glory. Heaven is our home at last; and will be our home for evermore.

During the early part of the King's ministry, he made some very interesting, and successful missionary tours through Galilee. On these circuits, his preaching was both private and public, in towns, villages and country-places. These were missions of mercy; and formed

the brightest episodes in his most eventful life. As he passed along the highways, the impotent people, who had heard of his marvelous cures, called upon him for mercy; and a touch from the fingers, or a word from the lips of the Great Healer and Helper, and virtue went out from him, to change the whole tenor of their lives, and gladden, perchance, the entire future of their existence.

At the close of his last journey through Galilee, the Merciful Missionary was filled with divine compassion for the neglected multitudes, who had thronged around him during his ministry among them. He saw them, as sheep without a shepherd; as a harvest ripe unto the sickle, without a reaper; and as a neglected vineyard, without a laborer. So he commissioned seventy of his disciples to go out, by twos, and traverse these destitute regions, confirm his teachings, and perform among them all needed works of love and mercy. His parting instructions, to them, were full of warning and comfort. Their mission was to be simple and self-supporting. The open hospitality of Galilee was ample for their maintenance. Here we have two essential elements to successful missionary work in any age, or among any people.

The King's miracles of healing were among his most wonderful works. These were not mere wanton displays of divine power. They were all rich, in their moral significance, and potent in their spiritual import. They were full of precious, and practical lessons to humanity. How truly powerful were all of his mighty miracles. He willed it, and the water was turned into wine. He touched the eyes, closed from birth, and the blind man

rejoiced at the first sight of nature's beauties. He blessed a few loaves and fishes, and there was sufficient for thousands, enough and to spare. He spoke, and the dead lived. He rebuked the powers of darkness, and devils were cast out of the dumb. He declared himself the resurrection and the life, and Lazarus came forth from the tomb, a fit subject to be loosed, and set at liberty. We would be perfectly safe in saying, that multiplied thousands were healed by him, during his public ministry. The maim, the lame, the halt, the blind, the deaf, the dumb, the leper, the demoniac and the sick, with all manner of diseases, were the objects of his mercy, and the subjects of his healing power.

There are important spiritual lessons taught us in all these temporal healings. They were but exhibitions of that infinite love and mercy, which long to heal the sin-sick souls of all men everywhere. Take, for illustration, the healing of a leper, and see how strikingly it represents the conversion of a soul. Leprosy is the very synonym for sin. There is such a striking resemblance in their origin, development and effects, that "the leprosy of sin" is an expression, no less trite, than true. The ban of the sacred law shut the leper out from the society of his friends and kindred, and drove him from the privileges of the holy sanctuary. He was doomed to walk comfortless and alone, in the shadow of a great sorrow. His life's journey was to be completed in sack-cloth, and deepest lamentations. His doom was far worse than death; and his destiny, through life, much more terrible than the grave. But the healing power, of the miracle-working King, restored him to society, with all its sacred immunities. Just so it is with the



sinner, in conversion. He is restored to the society of the good. The barriers are all broken down. The fetters are all shaken off. And the banished soul is welcomed to all the privileged immunities of earth and heaven.

The conversion of souls, or the forgiveness of sins, was the most wonderful work the Eternal King did while on earth. We love to contemplate Jesus in all his labors of love, and works of grace. But we rejoice most in the presence of his sin-pardoning power—his sin-killing, and soul-saving work. Before it, the wild and wayward became gentle and gallant. Their rough, uncouth manners became calm and candid. Their harsh voices, and grating discord were melted into sweetest music, and blended into heavenly harmony. And their sin-pardoned souls were filled with joy and gladness unutterable, and full of glory. The convicted man stood before the King, as his own accuser. He sat in judgment on his own case, and unhesitatingly rendered a verdict of guilty. The solemn thought, of living without peace, and dying without pardon, was too heavy a burden for even the chief of sinners to bear. He looked up into the face of the Sympathetic Saviour, and humbly, and earnestly plead for mercy. Jesus said, Thy sins are forgiven thee; and the burden of guilt and condemnation was all removed. The sinner, instantly, became a saint, and rendered to the King all the glory of his salvation. Now none of the losses, or crosses of earth could destroy his peace of soul. Neither could the saddest disappointments, nor the deepest sorrows rob him of his cherished hope of heaven. Henceforth he will walk the earth, a sovereign, amid want, poverty and penury, if

needs be, knowing that boundless stores of wealth await him, in the mansions of the blest. Such are the effects of the sin-pardoning, and soul-saving power of the King, in his wonderful work of regeneration.

The most brilliant feats, and features of human life sink into insignificance, when compared with the marvelous, and miraculous works of Jesus. At times, the fame of these mighty works filled the whole land. But, notwithstanding all he did and said, many rejected him, his words and his works.

THE WAYS OF THE KING are without a parallel in the annals of history. No one else ever lived just such a grand life ; or died just such a triumphant death, as did Jesus of Nazareth. The sacrificing life, and sacrificial death of the King has enriched the whole world, and flooded millions of souls with the joys of salvation. No other individual ever walked through the same lowly valleys, or journeyed over the same exalted highways, that Jesus did. His ways, like his words and works, were peculiar to himself.

The King began his weary journey, over the stony paths, and across the desert wastes of earth with tender feet, and a bleeding heart. At times, his steps were followed by rejoicing thousands, who hung in deepest silence on his precious words, and watched, with deepest solicitude, his miraculous works. Wherever he went, in his public ministrations, the multitudes thronged around him, eager to catch a word, witness a miracle or receive a blessing. Sometimes, however, he journeyed, silently, and alone, over mountain wilds and desert wastes, in secret meditation, or sacred devotion. He often climbed the hills, and mountains of Palestine, in

the golden light of the morning; and as often descended into the fertile valleys and verdant vales, under the sunset skies or starry heavens at night-fall. But often, during his public ministry, he was troubled with the most inveterate enemies, watched by secret spies, and blasphemed by the merciless rabble. But still, grace and gladness followed in his footsteps. Joy and gratitude hovered round his pathway. And voices of praise, and forms of beauty often welcomed him, at his coming. His eager heart always burned with the sacred fires of love. Hence, his ways were crowded with exhibitions of his grace, and manifestations of his glory. But soon the shadows, of gathering tempests, began to fall upon his noble brow. And he gradually assumed the features, and functions of the Man of Sorrows.

The King's countenance was veiled, at times, in deepest sadness, but he always wore a look of gentleness so infinitely tender and touching, that the multitudes of young and old, rich and poor were constantly drawn to him for sympathy and salvation. He fed the hungry in the desert, and healed the halt on the highway. He went from city to city, blessing the needy, and seeking and saving the lost. His time was spent largely among the poor toiling classes of earth. He loved to mingle among those who had neither wealth, honor nor office in the world. But, during the noon-tide of his ministry, all classes thronged his pathway in such vast multitudes, that even his enemies said, The world has gone after him. The laboring and heavy-laden, of every class, were always objects of his mercy. His greatest blessings were reserved for those oppressed by sin. It was a part of his divine mission to bring com-

fort and consolation to others, though himself a Man of Sorrows, and acquainted with grief. While walking himself, through the valley, and shadow of death, he was hanging out a beacon-light for the world. It does seem that in his deepest mysteries, sometimes, lay hidden his richest blessings. And beneath his mightiest sorrows, were often found his matchless mercies. The Man of Sorrows was, himself, a sacred mystery to the world. With all their prejudice, hatred and unbelief, he found his way to the hearts of men, saved their souls and sealed them heirs of heaven.

The King's ways were indeed wonderful. He was the Honored Guest in a princely mansion yesterday. To-day he is the Humble Visitor at the poor man's cottage. To-morrow, left at the mercy of an ungrateful world, he has not where to lay his sacred head. He was driven from Bethlehem, the place of his birth. He was expelled from Nazareth, the home of his youth. He was spurned from Capernaum, his residence by adoption. He journeyed to Jerusalem, where he was betrayed; and bore his cross to Calvary, where he was crucified, as the Rejected King of the Jews. This Peasant King wore, in all his travels, a peasant's garb. No patriarchal robes mantled his broad shoulders. No silver sandals clasped his weary feet. And no golden tunic graced his royal brow. On his body were the marks of sin; yet, in his person were to be found brightness without a spot, and purity without a crime. But he took upon his soul the burden of a still greater agony; and marched with firm, and fearless step to Golgotha, to meet its dreadful penalty.

John the Baptist was the King's forerunner. This

was to the Jews an age of doubt, a time of uncertainty—a transition period. The sceptre had departed from Judah, and they anticipated some mighty revolution. Crime was almost universal, and no remedy had been found for the ruin it had wrought. Iniquity had well nigh run its race, and reached its goal. The voice of the wilderness, in its calls to repentance, was stirring to its inmost depth the great heart of Israel. The Harbinger brought with him a strange, but hopeful message. His preaching was heart-searching, and intensely practical. The lessons he inculcated were deep in their moral significance, and universal in their spiritual application. All classes thronged to his ministry and listened with eagerness to his solemn warnings, and stern rebukes, as he endeavored to prepare the way of the Lord, by making his paths straight. But while the people mused, in their hearts, concerning the true mission of this man of the wilderness, he informed them of the silent, but majestic presence of the King of Glory.

Jesus came, and demanded baptism at the hands of John, that the law might be fulfilled, before he entered upon his priestly functions. The wild prophet, who had confronted kings with rebuke, and unmasked the proud Pharisees with indignation, felt his lofty bearing fall in the silent and sinless presence of the Unknown Nazarene. He acknowledged at once his inferiority; but finally submitted to the Saviour's request, and baptized him with the waters of the Jordan. And, as the King went up from the waters, the Spirit descended, in shape like a dove, and lit upon his head, in the presence of all the people, as a token of his Messiahship; while a voice from heaven proclaimed him, the Beloved Son,



in whom the Father was well pleased. Thus Jesus was initiated into his priestly office.

Peace, pleasure and plenty filled the whole valley of the sacred Jordan. The most luxuriant vegetation covered the fertile plains with blooming beauty. From these scenes of pleasure and fields of plenty, the King was carried forth by the Spirit, into the Wilderness of Temptation. Here, in a most desolate region—a weird and demon-haunted solitude—a hot and horrible desert waste—a wilderness of caverns and gorges, environed with death and desolation, the Saviour was sorely tempted by Satan. The story of this mysterious temptation is no mere allegory, but a sad reality. The great struggle was personal, and powerful. It was humanity's Best Friend in personal conflict with man's most powerful foe. The great battle was fought, and the matchless victory was most worthily won. Jesus met, and foiled the mighty tempter, in the wilds of the wilderness. After this signal victory, the ordinary temptations of life floated over his sinless soul, as lightly as the mists of the morning sail over the azure blue of heaven. This temptation is not without its special lessons of life for us. It shows us how a calm, strong and fearless man may overcome, under great disadvantages. It also teaches us how the weakest may obtain strength, which will ripen into victory over the strongest foe. With a proper use of the weapons it places in our hands, the weakest are made strong, and the most timid need not fear the combined powers of darkness.

The King, accompanied by his three favorite apostles, journeyed toward the memorable Mount of Transfiguration, and ascended its lofty height. It is not certain

whether Mount Tabor, Mount Hermon or some other lofty peak, was the scene of this most wonderful event. Tradition, however, points to Mount Tabor, and crowns it with the honor of being the place where the King revealed so much of his celestial glory to mortal man. It was evening's calm and silent hour, when he climbed the mountain slopes with his chosen witnesses. The grandest scenes of nature surrounded them; and refreshed their weary souls with thoughts, and aspirations kindred to those of angels. In such a frame of mind as this, they kneeled upon the sacred Mount in humble, grateful devotion. Their prayers, the sweet incense of loving hearts, were offered up. Then, according to oriental custom, the disciples wrapped their abbas around them, lay down upon the green grass, in the open air, and were soon cradled in the lap of nature's sweet restorer—balmy sleep.

But while the apostles slept and slumbered, the Master was suddenly transfigured. He was crowned with light. A vision of surpassing beauty, mantled his lovely form. And a diadem, of glory, circled his majestic brow. The apostles awoke, to behold the King in his unparalleled glory. His countenance shone above the brightness of the sun. His garments were whiter than the driven snow. And his entire person was wrapped in a perfect halo of radiant glory. With him also appeared Moses and Elias, clothed with all the beauty and luster of celestial beings. Oh! what a wonderful scene burst, in all its glory, upon the enraptured vision of the apostles, at the moment of their waking. There, in the darkness of the night, made darker still by the blackness of sin shone the glorified form of their

Gracious King, the Representative of the Gospel; and in the same flood of golden glory, were the celestial presence of the representatives of the Law and the Prophets. What a grand trio! the Lawgiver of Sinai, the great Prophet of Carmel and the Messiah of the World, all blended in perfect harmony. The law kept, the prophecy fulfilled, and the Gospel confirmed! The darkness of Sinai, and the mysteries of Carmel were all aglow with the glories of Calvary. The three were there talking together of the King's decease, and the glory that should follow. No wonder Peter said, Master it is good for us to be here; and desired to erect three tabernacles for them.

Among the many precious lessons taught us by this memorable event, we will notice but one in this connection. This is taught very plainly, by implication, in many passages of scripture; but in this event, it shines forth from a cloudless firmament, telling us that we shall know each other in our glorified bodies. It is a practical demonstration of future recognition. No problem could be more definitely solved. The cravings of human nature demand future recognition, as a certainty. The Bible responds to this demand, in all its assurances that the resurrection will reunite our souls and bodies, with their wonted individuality, and personal identity. The glorious anticipation of a reunion with our dear, departed ones, are infinitely sweeter and richer, when enhanced with the universal conception, or glowing with the confident expectation of not only seeing, but also knowing them in the better world.

Sometimes we fail, at first, to recognize our dearest friends on earth, when long absence has changed their

forms, and refashioned their features. So it may be, when we meet some of them in heaven. They will have undergone wonderful changes. When we see our aged fathers and mothers in glory, they will not be tottering, with faltering steps, along the golden-paved streets of the New Jerusalem. But glowing, with heavenly grace, and buoyant with eternal life, they will bound along over the celestial highways, with all the beauty and energy of spiritual manhood and womanhood. And our darling babes, rosebuds plucked in the spring of life, may be so changed by the transition to, and the growth of heaven, that we will not, at first, recognize the dear little, loved ones. Attendant angels may have to point them out, before we can know them, in their new forms of beauty, and fullness of life. But if so, we will not be the less happy, when our eyes are gladdened with beholding the lovely faces, and glorified forms of these our, at last, recognized parents and children. Yes, thank God, we will all know each other there. For this knowledge is an element absolutely essential to the existence of that joy, which is to be so unspeakably great, and infinitely full of celestial glory.

The heavenly communion, on the mountain heights, had ended; and the Royal Master, with his trio of companions, had wound his way down the deep descent into the low level of human life, at its mighty base. Here were assembled the eager multitudes, waiting anxiously the King's coming. An event had just occurred, in their midst, which alarmed his disciples, and agitated the great assembly. The disciples had failed to cure a demoniac boy; and were withering under the innuendos of the scribes and Pharisees. At this juncture



of the pending crisis, the thronging multitudes caught sight of the Mighty Nazarene, and greeted him with their warmest salutations. Jesus was informed of the circumstance by the father ; who now presented his boy to him, praying his divine interposition in his behalf. His malady was, indeed, a fearful one. His case was too desperate and deadly for ordinary means to avail any thing. But, at the words of the King, though with a desperate struggle, the evil spirit came out of the boy ; and he was soon clothed, and in his right mind.

In this memorable event, we are taught two important lessons. First, that there are forms of evil so deep-seated, and inveterate, that nothing short of fasting and prayer, upon the part of God's people, can ever free the victims from eternal death. Second, that to a perfect faith, linked with divine power, all things are possible, which fall within the range of God's will.

The Pharisees, at one time, that they might, if possible, entrap the King, dragged degraded misery to the bar of mildest justice ; and opened the most flagrant guilt, before the eyes of stainless innocence. This cold, pitiless brutality was extremely provoking to One, who was infinitely tender, because infinitely pure. Jesus loved those, whom others hated ; praised those whom others scorned, and comforted those, whom others crushed. This divine tenderness and deep compassion won for him the most passionate devotion of some, and the highest admiration of many. On this occasion, as usual, the Just Judge was also merciful. Having foiled the crafty designs of his enemies, in a reaction upon their own guilty souls, which drove them from his sacred presence, Mercy meekly said to misery, Go sin no more.



On the King's last journey, from Galilee to Jerusalem, the plaintive cry of ten lepers greeted his ears, and touched his tender, sympathetic heart. The voice of misery again found its answer, in the echo of mercy. He bade them go show themselves to the priest for ceremonial cleansing, that they might enjoy all the rites and privileges of social and religious life. At the sound of his potent voice, they felt the strong currents of pure life-blood coursing through their veins, with its wonted energy and vitality.

But only one of these healed lepers returned, to give thanks to the Merciful Nazarene; and he was a Samaritan. Jesus rewarded him. He also pardoned his sins, and saved his soul. This event teaches us, that temporal blessings are appreciated by a small minority of men; that we are more likely to call for divine aid, when afflicted in body, than when burdened in soul; that greater blessings are sure to follow gratitude for smaller favors, and that the voice of true supplication, may always find its counterpart in the salvation of the sinner.

Pilate, a short time before the crucifixion of the King, fearing an insurrection of the people, says he resolved on adopting a measure, which promised to reconcile the enemies of the Nazarene, and establish the tranquility of the city. So he wrote to Jesus, requesting an interview with him, at the Pretorium. Jesus came, and Pilate trembled from head to foot. In referring to this interview with Jesus, Pilate wrote the Emperor of Rome, as follows: You know that in my veins flows the Spanish, mixed with Roman blood, as incapable of fear, as it is of puerile emotion. But when the Nazarene made his

appearance I was walking in my basilic; my feet remained fastened as with an iron hand to the marble pavement, and I trembled on every limb, as a guilty culprit, though he was calm—the Nazarene—calm as innocence. He stopped when he came to me, and, by a signal, seemed to say, I am here. \* \* \* At last I said to him, Jesus—and my tongue faltered—Jesus of Nazareth, I have granted you for the last three years ample freedom of speech, nor do I regret it. \* \* \* I am glad of having allowed you that liberty, of which you are so worthy. However, I must not conceal from you the fact that your discourses have raised up against you powerful and inveterate enemies. This is not surprising. Socrates had his enemies, and he fell a victim to their hatred. But yours are doubly incensed against you, both on account of your sayings against them, and the liberty also which I have extended towards you. They have even accused me of being indirectly leagued with you, for the purpose of depriving the Hebrews of the little civil power which Rome has left them. My request—I do not say order—is, that you be more circumspect in the future, and more tender in arousing the pride of your enemies, lest they raise against you the stupid populace, and compel me to use the instruments of justice. The Nazarene calmly replied: Prince of the earth, your words proceed not from true wisdom. Say to the torrent, Stop in the midst of your mountain home, because it will uproot the trees of the valley, and the torrent will answer you, that it must obey the laws of the Creator. God alone knows whither flows the torrent. Verily I say unto you, before the Rose of Sharon blossoms, the blood of the Just shall be spilt. I replied

with emotion, Your blood shall not be spilt. You are more precious in my estimation, on account of your wisdom, than all the turbulent and proud Pharisees, who abuse the freedom granted them by the Romans, conspire against Cæsar and construe our bounty into fear. Insolent wretches! \* \* \* I will protect you against them. My Pretorium is open to you as an asylum—it is a sacred asylum. Jesus, carelessly shaking his head, said, with his wonted grace, and a divine smile, When the day shall have come, there will be no asylum for the Son of Man, neither on earth, nor yet under the earth. The asylum for the Just is there (pointing to the heavens). That which is written in the books of the prophets must be accomplished. I mildly answered, Young man, you oblige me to convert my request into an order. The safety of the province, which has been confided to my care, requires it; you must observe more moderation in your discourses. Do not infringe. You know my orders. May happiness attend you. Farewell. To which Jesus meekly replied: Prince of the earth, I came not to bring war into the world, but peace, love and charity. I was born on the same day on which Augustus Cæsar gave peace to the Roman world. Persecution proceeds not from me. I expect it from others, and will meet it in obedience to the will of my Father, who hath shown me the way. Refrain, therefore, your worldly prudence. It is not in your power to arrest the Victim at the foot of the Tabernacle of expiation. And, so saying, he disappeared like a bright shadow behind the curtains of the basilic.

At one time, the King traversed the regions of Tyre and Sidon with his apostles. On this perilous journey,

he healed the Syro-Phenician woman's daughter, the deaf man of Decapolis, and did many other wonderful works.

At another time, the way of the King was upon the waters of Galilee. Omnipotence slept on the rolling waves. In the hour of danger and darkness, his disciples awoke him with their calls for deliverance. The King's voice was heard upon the troubled waters. The words of Jesus went floating out again, over the buffet-ing billows of the sea, and there was a great calm. So we may be called to pass through the moanings of a night-blast of sorrow, as we are sailing silently through the sunshine, and shadows of time, towards the shifting shores of eternity. But, if we hail the King of Glory on our way, the storms will soon be over, the darkness forever passed, and the day-break of eternal life will soon light up the distant shores of an endless immortality.

But, a short time prior to his apprehension, the King answered the call of the bereaved sisters, went to Bethany, and raised his friend Lazarus from the dead. Bereavement always touched his tender heart with deepest sympathy. A thrill of emotion swept over his entire being, and a flood of tears streamed from his weeping eyes, as he approached the entrance to the dark and dismal cave, where one of his dearest friends slept the silent sleep of death. The stone was rolled away. Jesus raised his eyes to heaven, thanked the Father for the confirmation of his prayer, and with a gentle voice awoke the dead sleeper, tradition says, to the enjoyment of thirty more years of light and life in this world.

The Jewish authorities now claimed that a Great Criminal was running at large, whose words and works en-

dangered the safety of both church and state. So after the resurrection of Lazarus, the Sanhedrim met in great perplexity. They dreaded the result of this matchless miracle; and hence, with treacherous purpose, sought to lay hands upon their Coveted Prey. Caiaphas and Annas were dividing the functions of a disgraceful priesthood at this time. In the midst of their evil counsels, Caiaphas advised them to sacrifice this One Victim, innocent or guilty, in order to save the whole people. The Council readily accepted his wicked proposal, and the secret fiat went forth at once, that the Despised Nazarene must die. The King was conscious of their deadly designs, so he retired to Ephraim to await the fullness of time, before he would submit to death at their hands.

When the time of the great Paschal Feast drew near, Jesus saw the pilgrim bands marching toward Jerusalem. So he left his place of retreat, and journeyed with a Galilean caravan to the Holy City. The King walked alone, in advance of his disciples, in mournful meditation, with all the majesty of infinite meekness. At length he paused, and told them the sad, sad story of his arrest, trial and crucifixion, by the rulers of the Jews. But they did not comprehend him. They were still dreaming of earthly thrones, and golden diadems, while the Master's thoughts were associated with the bloody cross, and the thorny crown.

They journeyed on. By the way, near Jericho, the city of palms, sat blind Bartemius, with his companion in misery, begging alms of the passing multitudes. Being informed that Jesus of Nazareth was in the company, they raised their voices in cries for mercy. He called



them to him, opened their eyes, and they followed the rejoicing multitudes, glorifying God with full hearts, and happy souls.

The great caravan rested at Jericho. The King was the Welcome Guest of the honored little publican. Zacheus had long desired to see the Prince of Prophets. When Jesus unexpectedly called his name, and bade him hasten down from the sycamore tree, it must have been with great joy, that he led the Messiah to his own house. But the multitude murmured, because the King put up with the rich little publican. However, his was a mission of love to the lost: and, with one touch of that love, he unsealed the little man's heart, opened his full purse to the poor and brought life and salvation to him and his household.

The caravan marched from Jericho, the shaded city; and the King led the way through the long, sultry, barren gorge which led to Jerusalem. They reached the end of their journey six days before the great Passover; and Jesus put up again at the honored home of Bethany. He had often resorted to this holy, happy home, where he was a welcome and most highly Honored Guest—the distinguished, and most Royal Visitor.

The next evening the King's friends gave him a supper. They regarded it a privilege, to feast the Noblest Guest that ever graced the festal board on earth. The supper was given at the house of Simon the leper. The disciples were also invited. The Chief Guest, and his distinguished companions, came in at length, and surrounded the festal board. Jesus occupied the place of honor. Lazarus was also present at this sacred festival; and many believed on Jesus because of him. So

the rulers, at Jerusalem, held a consultation, as to how they might best get rid of this living witness to the resurrection power of their Rejected Messiah.

One of a most important series of sacred events, which cluster around the closing scenes of his waning life, occurred while they were feasting. It was the anointing of the King to his burial. Mary came in with an alabaster box of precious, and costly ointment; and poured the sweet perfume over the head, and feet of her Blessed Master. And while the delicious fragrance filled the entire house, as an evidence of her gratitude, love and devotion, she wiped his weary, wayworn feet with her long, flowing tresses of golden hair.

Mary was censured by Judas, whose greatest vice was avarice; and who placed a less estimate upon his Master, and bargained, it is thought, that same night to betray him for thirty pieces of silver. Others regarded it as a useless expenditure; thought it too rich a luxury for a passing moment, but were ready to pity, and forgive the rash act, as they regarded it. None but the more spiritual present could appreciate this free-will offering. But Jesus spoke out in Mary's defense. The King said the anointing was timely, and appropriate; and that it should serve as a memorial of her devotion, through all coming generations. History bears the most sacred testimony to the truthfulness of his words of approval. We can not over-estimate the value of such fervid devotion. Its gifts never surpass the love of the giver, or the worthiness of him to whom they are given. The most precious gift, to Jesus, is always the one which costs the giver most, be it a mite, or a million. It is what it costs us, that gives value to our

donations, services and sacrifices, and makes them most acceptable to the King. Then nothing should be deemed too costly to give cheerfully to him, who gave himself for us. Our very best time and talents should be consecrated most affectionately to Jesus.

There was a general belief, that the King would be present at the Paschal Feast. But none knew that the Lamb of God was to be slain, as the Sacred Sacrifice of that memorable Passover. The arrival of the Galilean Prophet was to be an event of the most intense interest. When it was known on Sunday morning, that he would enter the Holy City that day, many were ready to go out to meet, and welcome him as their King. He left Bethany on foot, followed by the multitudes. But ere he reached Jerusalem, they lifted him upon a colt, and the triumphal procession began. It was no seditious, or political movement, but rather the outburst of religious joy. It was not the enthusiasm of ambitious triumph, but the simple exultation of his despised disciples. The King rode, not upon a war-horse, but on an animal, the symbol of peace. He entered the city, not as a mighty conqueror with the spoils of war, but as a meek and Lowly King, bringing the blessings of salvation, and the hopes of heaven.

The procession paused. The King wept, for the second time, over the doomed city. He uttered his prophetic lamentation of her coming destruction. He saw that she knew not the time of her visitation, and would not heed the things which belonged to her peace, that she might indeed be the joy of the whole earth.

The multitudes moved on. The pilgrims, at Jerusalem, heard the glad shouts of the coming company, and

streamed out to meet the humble procession. There was a general jubilee. Palms of victory were waved in the air; olive branches of peace were strewn in the way, and the garments of rejoicing multitudes were scattered along his path, while thousands of voices swelled the song of welcome to the triumphant King of Glory. Even the children joined the swelling chorus, with shouts of hosannas to the Son of David. The haughty Pharisees, mortified at these Messianic, and kingly titles, commanded the Master to rebuke his disciples, but were sorely rebuked themselves in his gentle reply.

The procession reached the gates of the city in triumph. The multitudes dispersed. Jesus dismounted, entered the Holy Temple, purged it, and began once more his merciful ministrations within its sacred walls. Sufferers came, and were healed. Sinners sought him, and were saved. The authorities listened to his gracious words, witnessed his wonderful works and feared the unknown results. But still they despised, rejected and condemned their most Merciful King. The children of the Temple, in their innocent delight, prolonged the glad hosannas which had welcomed him to their city. But the Pharisees indignantly called his attention to them, only to meet with another shameful defeat in his apt reply, Yea, have ye not heard, Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise.

At this time, some Greeks came to Jesus. An interesting tradition says, they were the emissaries of the king of Edessa, who sent them to seek healing in his name; and tender Jesus an asylum in his comfortable little city. This legend adds, that though Jesus declined his offer, yet he rewarded his faith by writing him a

letter, healing his disease and giving life to him and all his house. Thus the Day of Triumph ended; and Jesus took the twelve at night-fall, and returned to Bethany.

On Monday morning, the King came early to the city, and again entered the Temple. A stately, and most formidable deputation from the great Sanhedrim waited upon him. They hoped to overawe the Despised Nazarene with their flowing robes, imposing presence and commanding address. They at once demanded his authority, for teaching and healing in the Holy Temple. Upon what authority do you, a poor, illiterate Nazarene, assume the faith and functions of a Rabbi, and Prophet in Israel? His reply confounded them. Was the baptism of John from heaven, or of men? But they would not answer, save to their own shame and confusion. We can not tell. So Jesus dismissed them, by declining to give any authority, save that which they found in his own Divine Personage. This was another terrible wound, which his enemies would never forgive, nor forget. This defeated deputation was forced to the back-ground; and Jesus continued instructing the people. He spoke in parables that all could understand. In these parables he showed the Jewish hierarchy, that they were guilty of lying lip-service, blind presumption and wicked rebellion, in their shameful rejection, and contemplated crucifixion of their Messianic King. He forced them to admit, that God could in justice deprive them of their exalted privileges, and give their vineyard to the Gentiles. These things so enraged them, that they would have rushed violently upon him, had they not feared the people. But night closed the Day of



Parables; and the King returned, unmolested, to his village home; while his enemies met again, in dark counsel, to see how they could best accomplish his speedy destruction.

The next morning ushered in the Day of Temptations. Jesus arose early, and with his apostles entered, for the last time, the courts of the Holy Temple. He was barely seated, before the Herodians and Pharisees approached him, with the strategy of a deeply-laid scheme for his destruction. These Herodians were Herod's satraps—mere provincial courtiers, basking in the starlight of a petty tyranny. Their existence had only a political significance, for they stood outside the current of religious life, in open defiance to all the Mosaic institutions. The simple fact, that the Pharisees would tolerate partnership with such characters for a moment, shows how deep, and deadly their hatred was for the Humble Nazarene. As though a dispute had risen between them, these crafty Herodians, with their wonted cunning, courtesy and compliments, desired the Great Prophet to decide the question, as to whether or not it was lawful to pay tribute to Cæsar? They hoped, if he answered in the affirmative, the multitudes would forsake, and help to slay him; but, if in the negative, that he would secure the ill-will of the Roman authorities, who would willingly put him to death. But their hypocrisy was unmasked, and their hopes soon blasted. They admitted that their national coin bore the image and superscription of the Emperor, and consequently was the acknowledged symbol of his legal authority. Therefore Jesus commanded them to render to Cæsar his dues, as an earthly ruler; and to God, that which so

justly belongs to him, as their Eternal Sovereign. Humiliated by this unexpected failure, they smothered their malice, and reluctantly retired.

The Sadducees, hoping better success would attend their efforts, now ventured into his divine presence, with their silly question about the seven-fold widow, and desired him to tell whose wife she would be in the morning of the resurrection. They thought to array their entire sect against him, by calling him out on this subject. But a gentle reproof, setting forth the true nature of the resurrection body, and the angelic relation of the redeemed in heaven, silenced at once these supercilious Sadducees.

But still unwilling to give up the struggle for mastery, they sent a learned scribe to the Saviour, with a question upon which the two great Rabbinical schools were disagreed. These schools had added immensely to both the ceremonial and moral laws of Moses. They had reached the conclusion, that they aggregated six hundred and thirteen. But which was the greatest commandment, of all that number of affirmative and negative precepts? This was the question, which the conceited scribe proposed to Jesus. He expected his answer to alienate one or the other of these strong elements from his following. But not so. Jesus summed up the whole decalogue, in love to God and man, saying, On these two commandments hang all the Law and Prophets. And none could object to his answer, though entirely foreign to the purpose of his enemies. This was their last effort to entrap the Saviour by the words which fell in wisdom from his sacred lips.

The King now put one question, bearing directly upon

their Messianic hopes, to his learned and arrogant interrogators. But their superficial knowledge failed to subserve their purposes, on this all-important subject. So they laid their hands upon their mouths in silence and in shame, before the great multitudes. But the bitter venom, of their malignant hatred, had not been extracted by the long forbearance of the Saviour. The midnight darkness of their souls had not been illumined by the meridian light of his matchless wisdom. They courted their own blindness, denied their gross ignorance, and would not repent of their most heinous sins. Their purpose to destroy the Innocent Nazarene was irrevocably fixed in their wicked hearts. Infinite love had failed to win them for Jesus. There was no longer any hope of their reconciliation to the King. They were stereotyped in unrepentant malice, and must be doomed to eternal banishment. Stern justice was now summoned to the front. And in the audience of all the people, Jesus rolled over their guilty heads, with the weight of a crushing thunderbolt, his seven-fold woe unto those scribes, Pharisees and hypocrites, who sought to compass his death. In utter condemnation of the past, present and prophetic future of their wicked lives, the Divine Prophet solemnly pronounced the Dreadful Denunciation upon them, and their doomed city. He hung the purple cloud of divine retribution, in prophetic vision, over the beauty, and glory of Jerusalem; and bade them listen in dread and terror at the gathering elements of destruction, which would soon burst in fury on the defenseless heads of her unhappy sons and daughters.

And, on leaving the sacred precincts of the Holy

Temple, Retiring Deity, with one prophetic breath, leveled its massive walls and magnificent splendors all in the dust. Thirty-five years later found it smoldering in the ashes of its own destruction. Then silently and sadly the sacred company turned their backs upon, and bade a final farewell to the great building, crossed the Kidron, climbed to the summit of the Mount of Olives, and sat down to rest.

The scene was well adapted to inspire the Saviour with the most solemn thoughts. Deep down in the valley beneath him lay the sad and silent Sea of Death. Just behind him lay the Holy City, beloved and glorious even in her sins. At his feet slept the lonely garden of Gethsemane, so soon to be the sombre scene of his first great agony. The gathering shades of the evening deepened the gloom of the hour; while the setting sun of his natural life threw a still deeper darkness across the sad scenes of his earthly pilgrimage. Amid the silent shadows of such a sacred solemnity, the Saviour delivered his farewell discourse to his sorrowing disciples, on the Last Things. In this sermon he showed them two distinct horizons, and pointed out, by the most fearful signs and parables, two of the world's most memorable events—the fall of the Jewish polity, or the last days of that wicked generation, with its coming retribution; and the end of time, or the final account of the race, at the dreadful judgment of the Great Day. In his sad refrain, the King referred again to his betrayal and crucifixion, then but two days in the future. So closed his last matchless discourse, and so ended the last day of his public ministry. And they arose, and walked to Bethany to await the night of his darkest agony. Could

we but trace the footsteps of the King, from place to place, day in and day out, as he went forth on his missions of mercy, during his ministry, we would have three years of varied, and almost incessant labor, the crowded activities of which would fill our souls with wonder and amazement. But now the words of the King's public ministry have all been spoken; the works of his divine mission have all been finished; the ways of humanity have all been trodden; his time is fully come, and he is ready to place heaven's seal upon all his words, works and ways, in his own sacrificial death upon the cruel cross.





# THE CRUCIFIXION OF THE KING.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

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*They \* \* \* crucified the Lord of Glory.—I COR. 2: 8.*

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THE apprehension, trial and crucifixion of the King of Glory was the most disgraceful and diabolical tragedy that history has ever recorded. Death upon the cross was, of all the cruel executions of antiquity, the most terrible, and inhuman. And the shameful execution of the Innocent Nazarene was marked with rare exceptions to all other crucifixions. Such cruelties, as were then and there exhibited, knew no reverence, and felt no compassion for the Innocent Victim. This story of the cross, burdened as it is with sadness, loaded with sorrow and crowned with the bitterest agonies, is by far the most thrilling story of all ages. It is the story of the world. It is a divine tragedy, without a parallel in the archives of the universe. It is the most memorable event ever marked by the shadows of time. It was the consummation of the bloody sacrifices of ages. It was the redemption of the world. It was the Author of Life, hanging upon the cross, in the agonies of death.

The Passover, a great Jewish festival, was at hand. Multitudes flowed together. The Holy City was crowded, packed and jammed. Pilgrims, from every part of the Holy Land, and Jewish wanderers, from every nation

under heaven, were present to take part in the great national festival. The rulers of the Jews availed themselves of the popular exultation, which always manifested itself, among the vile rabble, during the solemnities of a Passover. They also employed the treasure of the Holy Temple, in bribing the lewd and licentious fellows to cry for the blood of the Hated Nazarene.

THE APPREHENSION OF THE KING is the first scene in the great tragedy. The indignant hatred of his enemies knew no bounds, after his seven-fold woe was pronounced against them. They were determined to compass his death at the earliest possible date. To perfect their plans, and accomplish their object, at once, they met on Tuesday night, in the palace of Caiaphas the high-priest. It was a motley and indignant mob, met in council. The Pharisees, Sadducees, scribes, priests, Herodians and elders of Israel, with all their differences, and hatred lost, for the time being, in their common and intense hatred for the Young Rabbi of Nazareth, were uniting their efforts, in an unholy alliance, for the destruction of the World's Messiah. From the deep, and dark revenge of such an ungodly alliance, or combination, no earthly power could save their Virtuous Victim. They decreed that he should die without delay. But not by violence, for fear of offending the multitudes. The treacherous Judas was at their disposal, possibly leagued with them in this dark and deadly council.

But they were doomed to disappointment. The King did not return to Jerusalem the next day, as they expected. The multitudes listened in vain for the sound of his matchless voice in the courts of the Holy Temple. He was among the hills, resting in silence, or wrestling

in prayer, preparatory to the great struggle with death.

But the next evening he sent two of his apostles in advance, to prepare for the observance of the Paschal Feast. Still later, accompanied by the residue of the twelve, he entered the city, and went to the room where they ate the Passover. Here Jesus pointed Judas out as the traitor; and bade him do his treacherous work quickly. Here also the King girded himself, and washed his disciples' feet, teaching them the lesson of humiliation and self-denial for the good of others. Here, too, the Savior instituted the holy Eucharist, to be observed in memory of his anticipated sufferings and death, to the end of time. The dark clouds, which had settled upon their heads, glowed for a time, with the glories of sunset's radiant splendors. The Master spoke many words of comfort and warning to his faithful servants; referred to the prophecy which long since had numbered him with transgressors; and closed the sacred festival with a prayer for the disciples of all ages.

Then they arose, left the guest-chamber, stepped out into the silence of that oriental night, and started on their moonlight march to sad Gethsemane. They passed out through one of the city gates, crossed the Kidron and climbed the gentle slope, which led to the Garden of Prayer. As they journeyed on, under a mysterious weight of woe, the Master told them plainly that their Shepherd should be smitten, and his sheep be scattered abroad. He spoke of their becoming offended in him that night; and then listened in mournful silence to their vows of fidelity, so soon to be broken.

But they reached the scene of his first great agony;

passed into the Garden, and the shadow of a great sorrow fell upon them. The King knew that nothing remained for him on earth, save the most bitter physical torture, the most intense mental anguish and the deepest possible soul-agony, until he expired amid the death-throes of Calvary.

The curtain rises, and the terrible tragedy begins. The site is a beautiful, but lonely Garden, deeply shaded with olive trees, and fragrant with sweetest perfumes. The spectators are the silent stars, the silvery moon and the listening angels. The actors are, the Innocent Nazarene, and his eleven devoted, but timid apostles. They are grouped together in sad, but sacred converse. The majority of them are left to wrap their mantles around them, and sleep, for a time, upon the green-sward, beneath the dark shadows of the olive, and the still deeper gloom of their own midnight forebodings. The Master, with his favored three, moves off about a stone's throw, and kneels under the burden of a great sorrow, in agonizing prayer. A grief, too great for utterance, and a struggle, which could not long be endured, made his soul exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.

The King bade the three remain where they were, and watch with him while he went yonder and prayed. Jesus sinks down upon the earth, crushed beneath the weight of his mighty agony. The Man of Sorrows lies prostrate upon the cold, damp ground in long and earnest supplication to the Father, that, if possible, the bitter cup of his sufferings, may pass from his sacred lips. It is a place of many tears—the garden of a mysterious agony bedewed with bloody sweat. It is the bitterness of death. Yet in sweetest resignation to the

Father's will, his Son is ready to drain the overflowing chalice to its very dregs. This was a life and death-struggle with the powers of evil for eternal victory, in which great drops of the King's life-blood oozed out at the pores of his skin, and trickled down upon the ground like beads of rolling sweat. The Great Sufferer returned to his chosen three, to receive a word of sympathy from human hearts. But alas! they all slept. A gentle reproof was given, and he returned a second, and a third time to commune with heaven. And with his growing anguish, he falls again and again with his face to the earth. Oh! how bitter the cup, how fearful the anguish; how piercing the thrice repeated cry: Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me. But how submissive the spirit, which adds as oft, Not my will, but thine be done. This mighty struggle was far more deadly than death itself. It was the voluntary bearing of the immense burden of a world's guilt upon his own sinless soul. It was the bowing down, in humble submission, of the mighty Head of Deity to receive the awful stroke of divine justice, incurred by the fall, and executed by the malice of man. But the Father heard that master petition, and sent an angel to strengthen the weakness of the flesh. A gentle radiance rested upon the Sinless Sufferer, as he lay in agonies and tears. His plaintive voice was hushed; his bitter anguish lulled to sleep, and he arose, victorious from the mighty contest, with naught, save the crimson traces of that bloody struggle, upon his matchless form. Overcome with grief, the apostles have all found momentary relief in deep slumber. But the scene changes.



Jesus awoke his disciples, and they all started toward the garden gate. But, while his apostles had slept and slumbered under their weight of sorrow, his enemies had been wakeful, and vigilant in their active malignity. When they reached the entrance, they met Judas and his motley torch-light procession, ready to do their nefarious work. The traitor was excited, pressed hurriedly into the enclosure in advance of his comrades in crime, and prematurely gave the promised signal. At a gentle reproof from the Master, he fell back toward the entrance, through which the conspirators were beginning to press their way. The King made no effort at resistance or flight. His disciples tendered their services in his protection. Twelve legions of angels, mighty in power, hovered around him, waiting to obey his sacred behests. But, not so. The hour of his apprehension had come, and he was ready to meet the emergency single-handed and alone. He knew that the victory must be won by his own right hand, and his holy arm. Hence, the Lamb was willingly led to the slaughter. Calm and serene, in his kingly majesty, he stood before his captors, and demanded the object of their mysterious mission. And when told that they sought Jesus of Nazareth, he meekly replied, I am he. His divine presence overawed, and his matchless voice laid them on the ground at his feet. Thus, men of violence and blood, whose feet had never faltered before in crime; men whose hands rejoiced in the clash of arms, and whose voices were loudest in the cry of battle, cowered and fell before the meek and merciful Messenger of Heaven. His question, and their answer, were both repeated. But not until he manifested a perfect will-

ingness to become their Prisoner, did they dare lay their unholy hands upon the Sacred Victim. So the Mighty Conqueror voluntarily surrendered himself into the hands of his enemies, as a Helpless Captive. These ministers of death bound their Strange Victim. His disciples became alarmed, and forsook him. Of the people, there were none with him. His friends timidly withdrew to the back-ground, during the remainder of the fearful tragedy. Jesus was alone, and a Prisoner, guarded and guided by the worst of foes. At their command he marched, in his innocence, to the halls of justice, to be mocked and scourged, tried and condemned, crucified and buried. The first scene closes, and the curtain falls.

THE TRIAL OF THE KING is the second scene in the shameful tragedy. Jesus was a Captive, in the hands of his merciless enemies, who claimed that he had been running at large, for a long time, as a Great Criminal, whose words and works endangered the peace, and safety of both church and state. It was past midnight, when they hurried him from the moon-lit shadows of Gethsemane, over the Kidron, and through the silent streets of the sleeping city, to the courts of justice; or rather of injustice.

The curtain rises again, and the sham, and most shameful of all trials begins. They ushered the King, first, into the presence of Annas, the ex-officio high-priest, who, for nearly half a century, had virtually wielded the sacerdotal power in Israel. Here the meek, and Powerful Prince stood, a Submissive Prisoner for preliminary trial, at the tribunal of a most malignant enemy. No proof of guilt could be found against him.

Even circumstantial evidence of crime was wanting. The judge questioned the Prisoner, with regard to his doctrines and disciples, and received, in his mild reply, a severe rebuke. This made his minions feel that their master was false, and treacherous. They saw, at once, that the hoary hypocrisy of the crafty old Sadducee, stood abashed before the transparent innocence of the Young Nazarene. So one of his servants, with illegal insolence, and inhuman violence, reproved, and smote the Sinless Saviour, with the first blow which his sacred form had ever felt. But even the insult of a slave was borne in meekness by the Lord of lords. As though proven guilty of a crime, beyond his jurisdiction, Annas sent his Prisoner, in bonds, from a lower to a higher court, to that of the civil, or acting high-priest, Caiaphas. The priesthood strained its cruel prerogative to the utmost, in order to crush the High-priest of our Profession.

The scene changes. The King stands before his second judge. Caiaphas was high-priest that year, not by the grace of God, but through the favor of a Roman procurator. Many of the most desperate, and influential of the King's enemies were present by this time. In fact the whole council seems to have taken part in this trial, before it was over. It was virtually a trial before the great Jewish Sandhedrim. The very nature of this tribunal, over which the high-priest Caiaphas presided, made it extremely difficult for them to convict the Saviour, even unjustly, of any crime worthy of death. Their own party differences, and chronic hatred, were almost insurmountable barriers. If they accused him of being in opposition to the civil authority, that would

enlist for him the sympathies of the Pharisees. If they dwelt upon his neglect of the traditional observance of the Sabbath day, that would be in accord with the sentiments of the Sadducees. And if they complained of the authority he assumed in the Holy Temple, there were those in the council who had most heartily sanctioned its cleansing. Jesus could easily have stirred up these latent animosities; awoke these slumbering prejudices, and disturbed this temporary compromise of avowed enemies. In a few words, he could have upset all their plans, and arrayed the different factions of that council against each other with increased, and deadly hatred; but not so. It was not his purpose to defend, or defeat. But his prerogative was, to submit and die.

In their extremity, they sought those who were willing to bear false witness against the King, that they might put him to death, guilty or innocent. These bribed perjurers were but too eager to testify against the Sinless Son. Their false testimony did not agree. Like vapor, it melted even before these wicked judges, who could not reconcile it, so as to recognize it as valid evidence. The continued silence of their Virtuous Victim, maddened these malicious persecutors. But at length he broke the silence, to their joy, with the affirmation of his Messiahship. The false and malignant Caiaphas threw up his blood-stained hands in holy horror, and said they needed no further testimony, since he had made himself the Son of God. So the illegal ecclesiastical tribunal, with one voice, condemned the Sinless Saviour to death, upon his own sacred testimony.

Again the scene changes. The Pious Prisoner is committed once more to the cruel custody of the vulgar

band which arrested him, and taken to the Hall of Judgment to await the break of day that the entire Sanhedrim might legally condemn him to death. He was now regarded, by all these priestly servitors, as a fit object for insult and derision. So they heaped upon his defenseless head all the contempt, disgrace and ignominy that oriental servility was heir to. That silent meekness, and divine majesty, which raised him infinitely above his vile persecutors, seemed only to make him a more Welcome Victim for their low and ferocious ribaldry. They blinded his eyes, spat in his face, struck him with the palms of their hands, smote him with rods and then bade him prophecy for their sport. Oh! what a sad, sad spectacle; the Saviour of men in the midst of a savage, and wanton varlety; the Messiah from heaven held in vile derision, by a merciless rabble; the world's Deliverer in bonds, as a Pronounced Criminal, and the Judge of all men condemned by mortal man to death.

At length, the sad hours of his saddest night were passed, and the grey dawn shuddered in the morning blushes of a still sadder day for the Suffering Saviour. With the earliest twilight, in keeping with their oral law, but ignoring the Revelation of God, the great Sanhedrim met, in full session, to condemn him legally; or, rather to ratify the vile verdict of the high-priest's nocturnal council. So the dreadful sentence of the lower, and illegal courts was now ratified by the greatest ecclesiastical tribunal on earth. And a derision, more odious and reprehensible than that of any mere menials and knaves, followed, when the taunts and jeers of these sanctimonious dignitaries saluted the ears of their



innocent, but thrice Condemned Victim. What a terrible outrage! these noisy vassals, railing on their Silent King! the religious hierarchy, calumniating their own Lowly Lord! the ministers of personal vengeance, sitting in judgment upon the conduct of the Eternal Arbiter of divine retribution! the guilty Sanhedrim, rendering a verdict against their Innocent Messiah, through whom alone they could hope for acquittal in the great Day of Judgment!

The traitor, and principal actor in the King's apprehension, who had also been a secure spectator during his long, and lawless trial, hearing the infamous derision of the council, realized what an awful crime he had committed, in betraying his Master; and filled with bitterness remorse, went to the authorities, confessed his sin and tendered back the guilt-money for which he had sold his Lord into captivity. But they treated him with indifference and contempt. He was the broken instrument, with which they had accomplished their fiendish designs, now alike dishonored and despised. His remorse ripened into despair, with the sober thoughts of his deed of infamy, when he saw that he could not undo what he had unfortunately done. So he threw the money, for which he had sold his soul and his Saviour, at the feet of the priests, upon the marble pavement of the Holy Place, and went out and hanged himself; fell, and was buried in the Field of Blood.

The scene changes again. Early in the morning, the high-priests, and their emissaries led their Innocent Victim to the Pretorium. They hurried him from a high, to a still higher court; from a Jewish, to a Gentile tribunal; from a priest's, to a procurator's bar. They ex-

pected Pilate would readily ratify their decision, by passing civil sentence, at once, upon their Hated Victim, and ordering his speedy execution. But, not so. The Roman Governor was disposed to save the life of the Noble Nazarene, and spare, if possible, his innocence, the agonies of the cruel cross. The great Sanhedrim, with its vast numbers, and priestly prestige, hoped, no doubt, to overawe the Governor when they dragged the Innocent Nazarene into his princely presence, bound as a Condemned Criminal. The Pious Prisoner presented a sad spectacle, to men and angels—one which called forth the sympathies, and enlisted, at once, the powers of the procurator in his behalf.

The Jews ushered Jesus, with many accusers, into the Judgment Hall. But their hierarchs, stained with moral guilt, shrank from the ceremonial pollution of a Gentile court, lest they should be defiled, and could not eat the Passover. Pilate noted the ineffable meekness, and surpassing majesty of their Royal Victim; and then went out, and contrasted it, at a glance, with the pompous impiety, and insolent vulgarity of his haughty accusers and their menial slaves. He then demanded the Jewish authorities, to produce their accusations against the Accused Nazarene. This astonished them. They demanded his speedy execution, upon the Roman cross. But, to their surprise, Pilate now proposed a judicial investigation of the whole matter. His contempt for their wicked fanaticism, and his higher sense of Roman justice, forbade him giving the sanction of his tribunal to their dark, and illegal sentence of death. The dignity of his office would not allow him to become the mere executioner of their vague, and illicit verdicts against his best sub-

jects. Such, at any rate, seems to have been his passion, and his purpose at the beginning of the trial.

The Jews finally preferred three charges against Jesus; two of which were basely false, while the other referred to a perfectly legitimate claim. They said he perverted the nation; forbade the people to pay tribute, and called himself a King. Pilate, filled with disgust, but embittered with fear, deigned to notice the last charge only; though they all bore the sanction of the high-priests, and were backed by the rulers and rabble, as wild with passion, and as dark with hatred, as the angry elements of the raging sea. He ascertained, at once, through the statements of the Accused, that he had no just grounds upon which to take cognizance of the case. Therefore he frankly confessed, that he found no just cause of complaint against the Noted Prisoner; and proposed to set him at liberty.

But this public acquittal of the King, by the Governor, kindled the fury of his foes into a still fiercer flame. They resolved, that their purpose to crucify must not be foiled, by him upon whom they relied for its bitter consummation, when the Dreaded Victim was already in their deadly grasp. Hence their voices rose in wilder, deadlier tumult for the blood of the Just. By this time the city was overflowing with a reckless, profligate and tumultuous populace, which had joined the sedition, and were clamoring vociferously for the crucifixion of the Innocent Nazarene.

But Jesus stood, in his conscious innocence, with perfect composure, in the midst of this fierce tempest of human passion. It was not the fear of his enemies; neither their iron manacles, but the voluntary restraint

over his own infinite power, which fettered his hands, and made him their Harmless Captive. For, in his meekness, there was concealed awful majesty ; in his resignation lay hidden divine authority, and in his humble submission slept the embodiment of almighty power. But still he suffered, with but few to pity. He was defenseless, with none to plead his cause. He was the King of kings, with no diadem upon his royal brow. He was the Eternal Witness for truth and love, in the hands of falsehood, and hatred personified.

At this juncture, Pilate saw himself, in the midst of a rebellious city, without strength to suppress the wild commotion. He had a mere handful of veterans ; and therefore, was forced to tolerate, what he could not prevent. His palace, by this time, had assumed the aspect of a besieged citadel. All Judea was pouring into the devoted city. Jerusalem was inundated with crowds, from their mountain homes in Galilee, and elsewhere. And every moment increased the number of the seditionists at the Pretorium. But, in the midst of this mighty uproar, Pilate heard the name of Galilee mentioned, as the chief scene of his public ministry ; and a most happy thought suggested itself to his troubled mind. So, with one master-stroke of political policy, he thought to rid himself of the Princely Prisoner, by sending him to Herod, the tetrarch of Galilee, who had more direct jurisdiction over the case than himself, since Jesus was one of his subjects.

So again the scene changes. Through the thronged streets, amid the jeers, and taunts of the vile rabble, the Weary Sufferer was dragged, until brought into the presence of Herod Antipas, the murderer of his great

forerunner. The wily tetrarch was rejoiced to see Jesus. He had desired, for a long time, to witness some of his matchless miracles, and listen to some of his marvelous maxims. His majesty questioned the Pensive Prisoner with many words. But Jesus deigned not to utter a single syllable in reply. His majestic silence was the only compliment he paid to Herod's royal insolence. So the wicked prince, with his men of war, ignored the innocence, and mocked the misery of the Suffering Saviour. The cunning old fox, dreading the fate of him who pronounced the death sentence of the King, professed humility; protested his preference in favor of Pilate, and committed the fate of the Grandest Galilean that ever lived, to the hands of another. The royal profligate sent the Silent Saviour back to the precarious procurator.

Once more the scene changes. Once more spotless innocence stood arraigned before the trembling tribunal of the much perplexed, and wavering Governor. By this time, the marble stairs, leading to the hall of justice, groaned under the weight of the mighty multitude. The vociferations of the infuriated and merciless mob shook the royal palace to its very foundation. The relentless rabble belched forth, in deafening cries, Crucify him, crucify him! Pilate says, There was but one, who appeared to be calm in the vast multitude. It was the Innocent Nazarene. Often, in our civil commotions, have I witnessed the furious animosities of the multitudes; but nothing could be compared to what I witnessed in the present instance. It might have been truly said, that on this occasion, all the phantoms of the infernal regions had assembled at Jerusalem. The crowd appeared not



to walk. They were borne off, and whirled as a vortex, rolling along like living waves, from the portals of the Pretorium, even unto Mount Zion, with howlings, screams, shrieks and vociferations, such as were never heard in the seditions of the Pantheon, or in the tumults of the forum.

But, after a second full and fair trial, Pilate told the Jewish authorities, that their King was perfectly innocent of all their unjust charges against him. He also pronounced him spotless and pure, without guile; and consequently innocent of all crime, and hence infinitely remote from any offense worthy of death. He even went so far as to call for an ewer, and washed his hands in the presence of the maddened multitude, thereby signifying his disapproval of the deed which doomed him to death. But, all in vain. It was the life-blood of their Sinless Victim that these vile wretches thirsted for; so they answered, Let his blood be upon us, and upon our children. Crucify him, crucify him.

Here was the Governor's golden opportunity to vindicate the justice of his wise decision, by granting liberty to the Lord. But, fearing a general insurrection, he wavered, and fell from the claims of justice, to the law of expediency. He ordered him publicly scourged. Rude hands laid on his tender back the heavy rods. His flesh was seamed and gored with the lictor's lash. But, even this fearful cruelty, the very thoughts of which make the heart shudder with anguish, failed to rouse the sympathies of his presumptuous prosecutors. They still found pleasure in gloating over his terrible agonies; and took delight in adding insult to injury, and derision to disgrace. Pilate then proposed to release Jesus,

after the custom of such occasions, as a mere act of artificial grace upon the part of the people, rather than as an act of acquittal by imperial justice. But his enemies, who were as pitiless as death, and as remorseless as the grave, cried out more vehemently than ever, Crucify him, crucify him.

Pilate had been warned, in his own misgivings, and convictions of right. But to strengthen, if possible, his purposes of justice, his wife had also solemnly admonished him, in a public message, to beware, and not condemn the Just, and Holy One of Israel. She said, Last night I saw him in a vision. He was walking on the waters. He was flying on the wings of the winds. He spoke to the tempest, and to the fishes of the lake, and all were obedient to him. O Pilate! evil awaits thee, if thou wilt not listen to the vows of thy wife. Dread the curse of a Roman Senate, dread the powers of Cæsar. Gladly would the Governor have heeded those solemn admonitions; quickly would he have driven the Jewish authorities, with contempt, from his presence; and willingly would he have set the Royal Captive at liberty, but it was too late. Weakness, cowardice and guilt were his insurmountable barriers. The bitter insults which he had heaped upon the oppressed Samaritans: the secret assassinations of the Jews, by disguised emissaries; and the innocent blood of those Galileans, which he had mingled with their sacrifices, all cried long, and loud for vengeance. His former conduct had now recoiled on his own guilty head, and rendered his personal will, and wishes, themselves, barriers to justice. As a result of past wrong-doing, he was now powerless to do right, save at a great risk of loosing his procura-

torship, and possibly his life. Thus it always is with the weak and wavering ones of earth.

The people clamored for the Paschal boon, which Pilate had offered them. But they would not accept it in the person of the Humble Nazarene. They preferred one Barrabbas, a seditionist, and a robber, to the Sinless Saviour of the world. They loathed the Innocent, but loved the guilty one. They chose the murderer, but rejected the Messiah. Pilate released unto them Barrabbas; but still they were not content. In vain he sought to reconcile the rabble, to the release of their Rejected King. The chief priests had prevailed upon the multitudes, to join them in demanding his crucifixion, and the more the procurator sought to release their Priceless Prisoner, the more vehemently they rent the air with their wild, and hideous yells of, Away with this man! Crucify him, crucify him.

Then the guards took Jesus back into a private hall of the Pretorium, where, in the presence of the Roman cohorts, they went through the heartless ceremonies of a mock coronation. They plaited a crown of thorns, and placed it upon his royal brow. They stripped off the white robe, with which Herod had unwittingly represented his innocence and purity, and put on the purple robe, fit emblem of his royal dignity. They also placed in his hands the reed-sceptre, striking symbol of that matchless power, and divine authority, which would spring up out of the weakness, and submission of that helpless, and apparently hopeless hour of savage torture. Then, with feigned solemnity, and the most derisive homage, they passed before him, bent the knee and offered their mock salutations of, Hail, King of the

Jews, little knowing how minutely they were prefiguring the time when every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess him, King of kings and Lord of lords, to the glory of God the Father.

But Pontius Pilate still desired, and still strove to save the life of the Tortured Victim. He took him forth again before the merciless multitude, his bleeding brow crowned with thorns, and his lacerated back robed in purple, and, in that touching language which has since thrilled millions of hearts with deepest emotion, he exclaimed, Behold the man ! But the Gentile soldier, who had shed blood upon many a battle-field, plead all in vain with a heartless Jewish priesthood, for the rescue of the Sinless Sufferer. This time the chief priests, and officers led the mutinous multitude in the sad refrain of their death liturgy, Crucify him, crucify him.

The Governor now proposed to connive at their sin, if they would but take, and crucify him themselves. But they stubbornly demanded absolute sanction ; and would be put off with nothing short of his condemnation, and crucifixion by the civil authorities. But, on learning that Jesus claimed to be the Son of God, Pilate made one more desperate effort to release him ; for his fears were greatly intensified. But the Jews threatened him with Cæsar ; and the proud procurator, reluctantly, yielded to their demands. Time had moved heavily on, with the Submissive Sufferer ; and he was ready to welcome the last scene in the divine tragedy. The Governor had failed, in repeated efforts, to rescue the King of Glory from the death-grasp of his evil enemies. The authorities, dignitaries and sanctities, of Israel had repeatedly rejected their King ; and were still anxious to

deliver him over to the Gentiles, to be crucified upon a Roman cross. In calm, majestic silence stood the Bleeding Victim, upon whom all eyes were fixed, waiting patiently to hear the final decision of the guilty Governor, which he knew would condemn him to die. So the dreadful sentence was at last pronounced. It fell in broken accents from trembling lips—a sentence which doomed the world's Greatest Benefactor to the most terrible death ever invented by human cruelty—even the ignominious death of the cruel cross. The second scene closes, and the curtain falls.

THE CRUCIFIXION OF THE KING is the third, and closing scene in the heartless tragedy. There is no time now to question about the guilt, or innocence of the thrice Condemned Victim. The sentence of death has passed, and the law must be speedily executed. Jesus was led from the Judgment Hall; and preparations for the triple execution began at once. The soldiers stripped the scarlet robe, stained with innocent blood, from the Royal Redeemer, and clad him in his own artless apparel. They prepared the huge cross, and laid it, in part at least, upon his shuddering shoulder.

The Centurion marched the Paschal Lamb out, in company with two vile victims, amid millions of spectators, coldly inquisitive, or furiously hostile, and the cross-procession moved on towards the place of a skull. This was a sad procession indeed; but the most memorable, that ever moved upon earth. It was more significant than any triumphal march, and far more sorrowful than any funeral cortege the world has ever known. The Man of Sorrows was now on the Sorrowful Way to

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death. Sadly, silently, sorrowfully he totters towards Golgotha, with the cross, the dread instrument of his own death-torture, upon his bended back. The air was rent with taunts, insults and blasphemies, as he dragged his weary, aching limbs towards Calvary, to die, that his vile tormentors might live.

But on the way to death, the King fainted, and fell under the weight of his mighty burden; and the cross was laid on one of his disciples, Simon, a Cyrenean. They hurried him on, in his weakness, to the agonies of Calvary. As they marched on, over the Via Dolorosa, a mighty volume of sympathy rolled up from the bleeding hearts of the devoted women, who followed him to the cross with boundless sorrow. Their great grief found vent only in expressions of sympathy, and compassion for the Suffering Saviour. They beat upon their breasts, and rent the air with their mournful, and motherly lamentations, until the King bade them, as daughters of doomed Jerusalem, weep rather for themselves, and their children.

Still, the Bloody Victim, the Living Sacrifice, with his face swollen from the cruel blows of the smiter, and blood-stained from the crown of piercing thorns, followed by the boisterous and maddened mob, was hurried on to Golgotha, with none to ask for his release, or delay his execution. At length they reached the fatal spot, where the Lamb of God was to be sacrificed, to satisfy the demands of justice. Here the Divine Victim was to be substituted for all human victims; and propitiate for the sins of the whole world, in order to appease offended heaven. Here the great sacrifice was to be offered, which would reach back in its efficacy to

the first transgression, and forward through futurity, to the consummation of time. From this altar of expiation, the blood of the Just was to roll in life-giving streams, which would wash away the sins of the world.

The place where the King of Glory died is the most sacred spot on earth. Men may revere the memory of their illustrious dead. They may rear monuments in honor of the patriot, the statesman and the philanthropist; but in all the archives of history there is no name like that of Jesus, and no shrine of devotion before which men bow, to be compared with the cross of Calvary. The Cross of Christ is the central point in human history; the boundary line between the ancient and modern worlds, and the connecting link between earth and heaven.

We love to contemplate the King in his life-work on earth; for each act has its place in the divine economy, and every achievement its lesson of love for suffering and sinning humanity. But we love most to view him in the agonies of his death; because the lessons associated with the most precious memories of Christ cluster around the cross, and lift us nearest to heaven. My soul delights to revel amid the serene, sublime and sunshine virtues of the King's holy life; but it derives pleasures infinitely deeper and purer, beneath the shadows of his crimson cross, and in the gloom and glory of his new sepulchre, left empty on the morning of the third day. But the hour had fully come, for the offering up of the great sacrifice; and the Voluntary Victim was ready to die.

The curtain rises, at nine o'clock in the morning, and the last scene in the divine tragedy begins. The King

of Glory stands face to face, with the king of terrors ; but shudders not, during all the lingering agonies of his most dreadful death. The rude soldiery threw him upon the rugged cross, the instrument of his cruel death-torture, exposing his lacerated flesh and bleeding wounds to the gaze of the vast multitude of spectators. And, with deadening blows, they drove the huge spikes through his tender hands ; hands which had ever administered to the wants of the poor and needy. They also sent the iron nails, with retentless stroke, through his precious feet ; feet which had always run upon willing errands of love and mercy for fallen humanity. Now the crimson cross, with its living burden hanging helpless upon it, was lifted up, and with cruel thug dropped into the appointed soil, causing the most excruciating pains and agonizing groans. There the King, upon four bleeding wounds, hung between heaven and earth, a wounded weight of innocent agony. At every movement of the Submissive Sufferer, each vein and tendon of his crushed and mangled body throbbed with incessant anguish, and intensified agony. Never did a confessor, on the rack, or a martyr, amid the flames of death, experience such fearful tortures of both soul and body, as Jesus endured at this moment ; while a storm of shocking shouts, mocking cries and bursts of hoarse laughter went up from the raging rabble, in deafening volleys of visionary victory.

But soon was seen, over the head of the Despised Nazarene, written, in the three great languages of the ancient world, the true, but troublesome inscription in which Pilate had given vent to his indignation against the authorities of Israel, representing their Tortured

Victim to all spectators, as THE KING OF THE JEWS. This poisoned their hour of triumph. It showed the intimate relation of the cross to the nationalities of the world. So they sent, and besought the Governor to change the timely title, which he had given to the Crucified Nazarene. But, all in vain. What I have written is true, and changes not, was the import of Pilate's reply. So the Dying King, the truest, the greatest and the noblest of his race, still reigned, though his throne was but a rugged cross, and his crown a bloody wreath of piercing thorns. Amid all the jeers, taunts, and insults of his dying hours, the Silent Sufferer opened not his mouth, save to encourage, inspire with hope or, in some way, add to the happiness of others. Racked with the pain, and covered with the shame of a crucified criminal, no faltering words fell from his sacred lips. Forgiveness is the only revenge which finds lodgement in the heart, or expression in the words of the Sinless Sufferer. But his majestic silence, royal innocence and immaculate holiness radiated a halo of glory around the cross, which pleads far more eloquently than the deepest pathos of mortal woe, or the bitterest wails of dying agonies.

The King, who knew no sin, was numbered with transgressors. On either side they crucified a thief, to make more humiliating, if possible, his ignominious death. For a time these criminals joined the merciless persecutors, in casting insults into the teeth of the Dying Saviour. But at length the Suffering Innocence, which hung in meekness by his side, shamed into silence, and deepened into penitence the flagrant guilt of one of these justly punished outlaws. So, as the heartless re-

proaches of his enemies merged into deeper, and deadlier blasphemy, the penitent thief called for mercy; and bowed his guilty head, in humble submission, before the Crucified King, whose very weakness was matchless power, and whose seeming defeat was the most triumphant of all victories. The King spoke, and the miserable malefactor received pardon on the cross. One word from his sacred lips lifted the heavy burden of guilt from the bleeding heart of the dying thief; and the bitterness of death, in his sin-sick soul, was lost in the deeper thrill of love, which honored the voice of Jesus. The King's ear, even amid the agonies of the cross, was quick to catch the faintest accents of faith, though they fell, in weakness, from the lips of a dying malefactor. So, we believe, the shortest sigh of genuine penitence, which goes up from dying lips, is heard, by the Infinite Redeemer, amid the loudest hosannas of heaven. The promises of the cross say to the supplicating soul, though its last prayer be its first, This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise. The Christ of the cross tenders to trusting penitents everywhere, the very best of earth, and the whole of heaven.

The four soldiers, in special charge of the King, divided his garments among themselves, and for his seamless coat they cast lots. Thus they fulfilled the prophecy which said, They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots.

The fierce heat of the sun beat down upon the defenseless head of the Royal Victim. The sufferings of the crucifixion were intensified by the fearful loss of blood, and a burning, raging thirst followed the painful convulsions of the cross. So he called for water; but



they offered him vinegar mingled with gall instead. But he refused to drink it, possibly because he knew it would becloud his faculties, though it promised to mitigate his sufferings.

Human sympathy would, at least, have let the Victim of such an agony die in peace. But the malignant hatred of his enemies ignored all the claims of compassion; and, with the most vindictive irony, the Rabbis and rulers led the vile rabble, for three long hours in their rough taunts, bitter gibes and haughty sneers, in which they poured insult and mockery upon their Crucified King. But Jesus knew what the victories of the cross demanded. Hence he bore its indignities and agonies, with unwavering submission and fortitude. Despising its shame, he endured, most patiently, all its sufferings. Not a murmur escaped his fevered lips. He was reviled, but kept his peace: smitten, but resisted it not: mocked, but bore it all in silence; and afflicted, but opened not his mouth. In the deepest depth of his dying agonies, he called for no human comforter, or angel deliverer, to prevent his being "perfected through suffering." In his silence and submission, he fulfilled the prophecy and proved himself to be the Promised Messiah. In his cross, the Dying King saw the sign of his coming glory; and in his great sacrificial death, the opened gateway to his eternal throne in heaven.

But there were those, in that vast assembly, whose hearts beat in deepest sympathy with the Suffering Saviour. For all his acquaintance, and the devoted women which followed him from Galilee, stood afar off, beholding all these things, with bleeding hearts, and burdened souls. His mother's woes were also mingled with the

deeper sorrows of her Suffering Son. The Virgin Mary looked through tears upon her Dying Boy, as he hung in agonies upon the cruel cross. The prophetic sword was now piercing through her loving, and submissive heart. But the Son had not forgotten his mother. For, turning to her, and his beloved disciple, a face veiled in many sorrows, and eyes dimmed with many tears, he honored the maternal love of the one, and the loving fidelity of the other, in a few words which provided a home for the childless widow, and gave to John the dearest of all mothers.

All nature sympathized, deeply, with the Crucified King in his dying agonies. At twelve o'clock the heavens were gradually darkened, and remained so for three long hours. The waning light gave a gloomy aspect to the surroundings, befitting the mournful tragedy. The darkness increased, until a thick veil shrouded the face of the fading firmament. The stars shone out like funeral torches, shedding over the tragic scene a pale, lurid light, which gave to the mass of spectators the weird appearance of an assembly of hideous demons. A deep midnight darkness had veiled the sun, and shut out the light of heaven at midday. Midnight darkness had mantled the earth at noontide. It was night at high-noon in the streets of the doomed city. It was night all over the Holy Land, where Jesus had let his light shine as a sun for many days. It was also night in the dark souls of the King's enemies, where the blackness of darkness reigned supreme. It was midnight upon the path which many had that day chosen, and must travel forever. It was a dark, and terrible night upon all who had lifted the puny arm of flesh,

to blot out of existence, if possible, the Light of the World.

Night came on at noon, that human hearts might not be hardened at a deed done by the powers of darkness. Darkness came at midday, to teach men that they could no more do without the Sun of Righteousness, than nature could afford to dispense with the king of day. The rulers of Israel had attempted to blot out of existence the Sun of Righteousness; and God smote all the people with midnight blindness. The Holy City had closed her eyes against the Light of Life; and Jehovah veiled the heavens in deepest darkness. The keepers of the city sat sad, and silent in their watch-towers by the gates. The sentinels stood still upon her lofty battlements. And the Roman legion forgot its midday parade through her busy streets. All nature gave signs of dissolution, and this dark noontide uttered prophecies of irretrievable woe to the panic-stricken multitudes who groped their way, they knew not where, in the dreadful darkness of a day swallowed up in the blackness of night.

This supernatural eclipse of the sun was one of the Messianic prodigies, pointed out by prophecy, which signaled the displeasure of heaven at the crucifixion of her King. This was also the hour and power of darkness with the King of Light. It was midnight at noon to Jesus; for the darkness of his death was deep and desperate. Clouds of sorrow had often saddened his heart, and darkened his pathway; but this was sorrow's deepest, darkest night—the black ebon night of death. The Prince of Light was now brought face to face with the demon of darkness, in deadly conflict. But the

battle was not hopeless, nor the victory uncertain. The dread crisis was soon passed. With infinite ease the Victorious Victim vanquished his powerful foe, and triumphed gloriously over the combined powers of darkness and death.

But the sickened sun and the shuddering earth both testified to the magnitude of the enormous crime of the King's crucifixion. They both gave evidence of deepest grief at, and closest sympathy with, the sorrows of their Expiring Author. This supernatural darkness of the sun was accompanied by the most violent shocks of a mighty earthquake. The sun, in all his journeying, had never looked down upon such a sad sight, as that pitying noon-day mantled with the pall of midnight darkness. And the earth refused to let her inhabitants gaze on such an awful scene, without feelings of deepest awe and divine reverence. Hence, while the rocky sides of Golgotha were bursting open, a wonderful reaction took place in favor of the Dying Nazarene. The rocking earth filled the hearts of friends and foes alike with terror and dismay; and the cries of the multitudes went up amid the convulsions, and ruins of nature, in humble acknowledgment of his Messiahship. The Centurion expressed the sentiments of thousands of hearts, when he said, Truly this was the Son of God.

Pilate says, By degrees the day darkened like a winter's twilight. I, the continued governor of a rebellious province, was leaning against a column of my basilic, contemplating, athwart the dreary gloom, these fiends of torture dragging to execution the Innocent Nazarene. All around me was deserted. Jerusalem had vomited forth her indwellers through the funeral gate that leads

to the gemonica. An air of desolation and sadness enveloped me. My guards had joined the cavalry; and the centurion, to display a shadow of power, was endeavoring to keep order. I was left alone, and my breaking heart admonished me that what was passing at that moment appertained rather to the history of the gods than to that of man. A loud clamor was heard proceeding from Golgotha, which, borne on the winds, seemed to announce an agony, such as had never been heard by mortal ears. Dark clouds lowered over the pinnacle of the Temple, and settling over the city, covered it as with a veil. So dreadful were the signs that were seen, both in the heavens and on the earth, that Dionysius, the Areopagite, is reported to have exclaimed, Either the Author of nature is suffering, or the universe is falling apart.

The crucifixion of the King was but the culmination of a prolonged martyrdom. His sighs had been many and deep; his sorrows the burden of years; and his agonies the shadows of death, which had hung in blackness over his sinless soul from the cradle to the cross. Now the tide of battle was rolling high. The storm, which was suddenly to hush his soul in death, was sweeping over the Incarnation of Power in its wildest fury. Darkness still lay like a pall upon the earth; and spiritual death fell, like an avalanche of woe, upon the soul of the Suffering Son, whom the Father had forsaken. But soon the tide of battle turned. Justice dropped her pointless sword. Mercy's tears of pleading were turned into tears of joy, and the redeeming shout was sent ringing down the ages to cheer and comfort the helpless hearts of humanity, It is finished—Redemp-



tion's work is consummated—the atonement for the sins of the world is accomplished.

All was soon over. With a loud voice, the shout of eternal victory, the King cried, It is finished, commended his spirit to the Father and, in a shriek of more than mortal agony, bowed his mighty head, gave up the ghost and died. The great veil of purple and gold was suddenly rent in twain from top to bottom. The graves of the sleeping saints were opened; and many of them arose and made their appearance before the living, in the streets of the Holy City. So closed the divine tragedy; and so ended the long agony of years, and the sad, sad story of the cross.



# THE RESURRECTION OF THE KING.

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## CHAPTER IX.

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*With great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus.—ACTS 4: 33.*

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WE left the body of the Crucified King hanging lifeless upon the cross. The sun was fast sinking toward the western horizon, when the darkness rolled away from Calvary's Consummated Sacrifice. The chief priests, who had inaugurated their sacred feast by the murder of their Rejected Messiah, were much alarmed lest the sanctity of the Jewish Sabbath be defiled, if the bodies remained on the crosses. Hence they besought Pilate that the legs of the victims might be broken, in order to hasten their deaths, that they might be taken down before the setting of the sun. But when they came to Jesus, seeing no signs of life, they preserved the symbolism of the paschal lamb of which he was the Great Antitype. But, to be certain that his soul had passed out into the unseen world, one drove his keen spear deep into his side, from which flowed the crimson stream of life that settles forever the reality of his most positive death.

Death brings out the true meaning of life. It uncovers its virtues, reveals its fragrance and adorns all its grand achievements. No man was ever so great, in the

estimation of men, before, as after he had passed, with heroic fortitude, through the trying ordeal of death. So it was, that the noble self-sacrificing death of the King did more than any thing else to give tone, cast and emphasis to the great life he had lived. That grand life would long since have been only a thing of the past, no longer moving the hearts, and shaping the destiny of men, had it not been crowned with a still greater, and grander death in which it survived, and has swept on down through eighteen centuries, molding the lives, and modeling the deaths of millions of earth's happiest sons and daughters.

But Pilate says, Towards the first hour of the night I threw my mantle around me, and went down into the city toward the gates of Golgotha. The sacrifice was consummated. The crowd was returning home; still agitated, it is true; but gloomy, taciturn and desperate. What they witnessed had stricken them with terror and remorse. \* \* \* Sometimes groups of men and women would halt, then looking backward towards Mount Calvary, would remain motionless, in expectation of witnessing some new prodigy. I returned to the Pretorium, sad and pensive. On ascending the stairs—the steps of which were still stained with the blood of the Nazarene—I perceived an old man in a suppliant posture, and behind him several women in tears. He threw himself at my feet, and wept bitterly. It is painful to see an old man weep. Father, said I to him, mildly, who are you, and what is your request? I am Joseph of Arimathea, replied he, and am come to beg of you, upon my knees, permission to bury Jesus of Nazareth. Your prayer is granted, said I to him, and at the same time ordered

Manlius to take some soldiers with him, and superintend the interment, lest it should be profaned.

They took the body of the Dead King down from the cross, and tenderly bore it to the tomb. This was the saddest funeral procession ever seen on earth. The company was small, but their grief was too deep for utterance. Their demeanor was in keeping with the solemnity, and sacredness of the occasion. The light of a life dearer to them than their own had gone out, in darkness and in death. The darkest night that ever mantled the earth was gathering its evening shades around them, when they reached the garden, and came to the new sepulchre. Here the faith of his followers must have faltered. Here they felt that they were to bury the hopes of a wicked world. From this service of love and sorrow they were to go forth, they knew not where, in darkness and despair. But they laid their sacred burden down, in tears, at the mouth of an open grave.

The necessary preparations for the King's burial were soon made. The mangled and blood-stained body was carefully washed and wrapped in fine white linen. It was also perfumed with myrrh and aloes provided for its imperfect embalment. His obsequies were not so humble as had been his fortune through life. Jesus had lived in poverty; had been crucified as a malefactor, but was buried as a King. Joseph and Nicodemus, both men of means and honorable councilors, were interested in his burial. The one furnished the royal sepulchre and fine linen robes, and the other the costly perfumes which gave him a burial with the rich in his death.

The last kiss, the pledge of undying love for their

Sleeping King, had been given. Then they laid his sacred body in the new tomb, hewn out of a rock, rolled a great stone against its entrance, and the hurried burial of their Beloved Master was over. And his body, cold and chill in death, was left in the silence and solitude, the damp and darkness of the rocky tomb, while the disciples went their way to mourn over what they conceived to be an irreparable loss.

But the world should rejoice to know that the Prince of Life passed through the dread ordeal of death, and took away its sting and its stigma; entered the dark portals of the tomb, and robbed it of all its terror and its gloom. For now death is a welcome guest to his faithful followers; and the grave but a resting-place for the weary bodies of his sleeping saints, while their happy souls bask with him in the light and glory of a Heavenly Paradise.

The Buried King slept quietly in the new sepulchre that night. The next day was the great Paschal Sabbath. The courts of the Holy Temple were filled with formal worshipers. The white-robed priests were busy with their offerings for the sins of Israel. The voices, and trumpets of the Levites were loud and long in their calls for devotion. The high-priest, in his sacerdotal robes, showed with gorgeous splendor before the gazing multitudes. But it must have been with feelings mingled with fears, that they passed through the services of that memorable day. A portentous omen faced the thronging crowds of the Temple all day long. The Holy of holies, for centuries veiled in awful majesty, save to the high-priest who was only allowed to enter it annually, was now laid open to the inspection of the vulgar and



the vile. The presence-chamber of Deity, no longer filled with divine glory, was now exposed to the gaze of every wandering eye and wayward glance. The scenes of the past eventful day still crowded upon their melancholy memories. The innocent blood called down upon their own, and the heads of their children, was still fresh upon their crimson souls.

But the chief priests, fearing the resurrection of the King, went to the Governor, at evening fall, and obtained permission to place the seal of state upon the mouth, and station a company of soldiers around the door, of the sepulchre of the Sacred Dead. This was done under pretense, that his disciples might come by night and steal him away; and then proclaim his resurrection from the dead, as an evidence of his Messiahship. The authorities of Israel could not deny the wonderful prodigies, associated with his sacrificial death. The Jewish Talmud shows how far they were, even from disbelieving these stupendous miracles. The fact is, they knew too well that the foot of him, who was to bring glad tidings to Israel, had already left its sacred imprints in the valleys, and on the mountains of the Holy Land. They were but too conscious of the fact that they had crucified the Lord of Glory. And their only hope was to thwart, if possible, the purposes of heaven, in preventing his resurrection from the dead.

The King slept away another night quietly in the tomb. But, when the first streaks of dawn began to silver the darkness and usher in the light of the third day, the devoted Marys, all unconscious of what had been done the evening before, were hastening to the sacred sepulchre with more spices and ointment to com-

plete the temporary embalmment of their Buried King. They started from the city while it was yet dark, but so swiftly the dawn ripened into day, that, ere they reached the garden and came to the tomb, two suns had risen to flood the world with their light and their glory.

Jesus, the Sun of Righteousness, had risen from the dead with healings in his beams for all the nations of the earth. He rose early, even while the Holy City still slept in the balmy breezes of the morning dawn. For during a mighty earthquake an angel descended from heaven, and rolled away the stone from the door of the sepulchre; and the Crucified King came forth unseen by the sentinels, who became as dead men for fear of the angel whose countenance was like lightning and whose raiment was white as snow, and fled in terror and dismay at sight of the celestial vision. At any rate the devoted women, who were so early at the sepulchre, not knowing who would roll away the stone for them, found it already open, empty and without a sentinel, save the angels who informed them of the King's resurrection, saying, Come, see the place where the Lord lay.

The King's body was evidently missing. No one denied this fact. But what became of it? This is the question that agitated the public mind, and stirred the great heart of the populace. There were but two ways to account for its absence from the tomb. One was to accept the invention of his enemies, who with large bribes had induced the guards to testify to a falsehood, saying that his disciples came, in the darkness, and stole him away while they slumbered and slept. Now the Jewish hierarchy knew that it was death for a sentry to be found asleep at his post. So they promised to stand

between the soldiers and danger, in case the story reached the Governor's ears. But this invention, it is easy to see, bore, upon its very face, the impress of falsehood. If asleep, the sentinels could not know what had become of the body of the Crucified Nazarene. To say the least of it, sleeping witnesses should bear silent testimony. The second way to account for the missing body of the Buried King was to credit the testimony of the angels and those to whom he appeared after his resurrection from the dead. Here were competent witnesses, testifying to a truth of which they were perfectly cognizant. They were witnesses whose veracity could not be called in question for a moment. And they testified, with divine grace and great power, to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus.

The King's resurrection is a fundamental fact resting upon the highest order of historical evidence, and divine revelation. History affirms nothing more positively than it does the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. The writings of the New Testament show most conclusively that a general belief in this historic truth, as the fulfillment of prophecy, existed soon after the crucifixion, even while its events were still fresh alike in the memories of friends and foes. Sacred history also informs us that the King brought with him from the grave a unique and divine dignity, which proved him, beyond all doubt, to be the world's anticipated, but Rejected Messiah. This evidence makes his resurrection a fact as absolutely certain, as either his birth or his death, and glorious enough to transfigure all his sorrows and sufferings into joy and gladness for evermore.

But a general belief in the King's resurrection could

not have been the result of a recovery from a swoon after his crucifixion and burial. Nor could it possibly have been from a mere mental hallucination upon the part of his disciples, who claimed to have seen their Risen Lord. They did not, in the height of credulous enthusiasm, see mere visions of the Risen King. But Jesus revealed himself to them, after his matchless passion, in their calmest, and most deliberate moments, as those to whom the story of his resurrection seemed, at first, as an idle tale, by such infallible signs and proofs as to convince the most incredulous among them that he was verily their Risen Redeemer. These evidences of his resurrection revived, in the bleeding hearts of his followers, every hope crushed out by the crucifixion of the Divine Master, and became the bond of union which held the church together after his glorious ascension. Six weeks after his resurrection, their faith in this grand event, became the basis upon which all Christians built their hopes of immortality and eternal life beyond the grave. And upon this sure foundation the Christian world has stood for nearly nineteen centuries with unshaken faith in the promises, and power of this Risen Saviour. Now, if this faith had been merely an idle belief in a ghost story, it would long since have come to naught. But, not so. It has been accompanied by a human energy, and a divine power sufficient, in the face of the gravest possible opposition, and the most eminent perils and powers of earth, to sustain the ponderous weight of his growing kingdom down through the gathering ages of time ; and will be amply sufficient to bear her grandly and gloriously on to ultimate, and universal victory.

But the words of life which dropped in love from the lips of the King, are the embodiment of this vital truth, and he himself, after his resurrection, the representative of this individual life beyond the scenes and agonies of natural death. For his life, after the resurrection, was just as real, positive and personal to his disciples as was the same individual life of which they had seen the fruits with their own eyes, and felt the power in their own hearts, during the three years of his public ministry. Individual life, as a reality; personal death, as a certainty, and a distinctive resurrection, as a completion of our personal individuality beyond the grave, can never more be called in question, since Jesus lived, died and rose again as the Great Exemplar of this mysterious triad—life, death and the resurrection. For the body at death is not more intimately identified with the body at birth, than will be the resurrection body with the body at death. Every body will carry its wonted identity with it through the dim portals of death, into the gateway of an endless existence beyond the scenes of the tomb. And the glorified sons of the redeemed, at their re-union on the morning of the resurrection, will recognize the fact that their new bodies are identical with the old. Each soul will also know, perfectly, the individual characteristics of all others, since they will all be seen, through these transparent bodies, just as they are in the sight of God. For these grand lessons were taught the world, when the King showed himself alive to so many, after his mysterious passions, by such infallible proofs, and in ways best calculated to comfort the hearts, and confirm the faith of those who recognized him as their Risen Lord and Exalted King.



We are now ready to affirm, that the resurrection of the King was an event of paramount importance, both to the church and the world. In proof of this position, we need only remind you of the fact, that, after the fall of Judas from his apostleship; another was chosen in his stead for the express purpose of bearing testimony to the resurrection of the Master; and that the twelve did with great power give witness, while great grace was upon them, of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. Poets, sages and philosophers had, for centuries, regarded individual life as a wandering thought, a bodiless dream or, at best, as a mere spiritual essence, without form or fashion, to be lost, at death, in the great ocean of eternal existence, or dissolved in the mysterious realm of utter dissolution for both soul and body. But the resurrection of the King has taught the world the grand lesson, that individual life is a real, positive and complete vital force here, which will carry its wonted identity, and exalted personality with it, through the ordeal of death, into the joys, or sorrows of an endless life beyond.

But what evidence have we of the King's resurrection? We know he lived, died and was buried. No one denies these facts. But some have called in question the truthfulness of his resurrection from the dead. Let us examine the witnesses, and produce the testimony in favor of this fundamental doctrine, upon which our holy religion is founded. For, while our Christianity has so many massive pillars to support it, we regard the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ as the grand central pillar, the key-stone of the arch that shuts and binds the whole in one impregnable fortress, against which the

billows of opposition have beat in vain for eighteen centuries. By preaching this precious doctrine, of Jesus and the resurrection, with great power, the apostles overcame the deadly fascinations of ancient mythologies, conquered rebellious kingdoms, and triumphed gloriously over the heathen world. And the result of a belief in, and the preaching of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, is one of the most infallible proofs of its divine reality.

Our first witnesses are the many saints who came forth from their graves, after the King's resurrection, and appeared in Jerusalem, to the great terror and consternation of the inhabitants, as the trophies of his matchless victory over death, hell and the grave. These were all living witnesses, from the regions of the dead; and though they may have borne silent, yet they bore the most powerful testimony in favor of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus.

Our next witnesses are the astonished sentinels who deemed it useless longer to guard an empty grave; and fled in terror and dismay to the chief priests, to whom they related all the strange things which they had seen and heard at the sacred sepulchre. In their unvarnished story, they also bore the most positive testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. But in the face of this strong evidence from their own guards, the Jewish authorities, with but the shadow of a chance to escape the inevitable, attempted to hide these stubborn facts behind a refuge of lies, too incredible to be believed by even the most credulous of earth.

But Pilate himself tells us, that the sepulchre was found empty a few days after the crucifixion of the Naz-

arene; and that his disciples published all over the country, that Jesus had risen from the dead, as he had foretold.

But our most reliable witnesses are the angels who descended from heaven, rolled away the stone, saw the King come forth and bore the most sacred testimony to the same, before the devoted women, who were early at the sepulchre. Now, if we accept the evidence of men, this timely testimony of the angels is still greater. And they testified to this feasible fact in such simple, and comprehensive language, that none, not even the most illiterate, could fail to comprehend it. They said plainly, He is not here ; he is risen from the dead. And no evidence of earth can impeach this tangible testimony from heaven.

But the Risen King appeared himself that morning, first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast so many devils, and then to all her companions who had seen the holy visions and heard the angelic voices at the door of his empty sepulchre. When he hailed them in human voice, with the familiar words of a salutation which they had often heard, he spoke so kindly and tenderly that they knew it could be no other than the voice of their Risen Jesus ; and hence they fell down, took him by the feet and worshiped him. So when they testified to his resurrection, in the presence of the eleven apostles and the other disciples, they could say, The Lord is risen indeed ; we were not only told so by the angels, we found at the empty tomb, but we have seen him with our own eyes, did fall down, take him by his wounded feet and worshiped him ; and we know for a truth that he is risen from the dead. It is not strange

that Jesus appeared first to this loving band of women who came so early on the morning of that third day, to pay him, as they thought, the last tribute of affection. His distinct personality naturally led him to seek first to comfort and confirm his most intimate and devoted friends. They of all others would most easily recognize the divine presence, and be most rejoiced to see him alive again in the midst of the scenes of his sufferings, and hard by the agonies of his cross.

But when the apostles heard the story of the King's resurrection, Peter and John also made haste to the sepulchre; and when they entered in, they found it empty and in order. They say there was no sign of violence or robbery—no evidence of haste or midnight flight. Jesus seems to have risen early in the morning, as one would rise from sleep. The grave-clothes were lying in perfect order in one corner of the sepulchre. The empty tomb resembled to them a sleeping-chamber set in order by its occupant, for the visit of spectators, rather than a pilfered sepulchre.

But the King appeared also to Peter, it is thought by some, on the same day that he rose from the dead. Paul says, He was seen of Cephas. However, we know nothing of what passed between the Master and his impulsive apostle at this private interview. After that he was seen of James also. Neither have we any account of this interview, save in the Gospel of the Hebrews. Here we are told that James, the brother of Jesus, after the last supper, took a solemn vow neither to eat nor drink, until he had seen his Risen Lord. Therefore, soon after his resurrection, Jesus made his appearance, blessed bread and gave it to James, saying,

Eat thy bread now, my brother, since the Son of Man has risen from the dead. After his resurrection the King came and went at pleasure, with the velocity of thought. Doors, though bolted and barred, neither shut him in, nor kept him out. But he always adapted his disclosures to the requirements of his disciples. Hence they always recognized him, ere his departure, as their Risen Lord.

Again, the King appeared to two of his disciples, while on their way to Emeas. He approached them as a stranger; and walked along with them over the hills, and through the valleys, expounding to them the scriptures of eternal truth. For, beginning with the law of Moses, he passed down through the prophets, showing them that it was necessary to the fulfillment of these scriptures, that Christ should come, be crucified and buried, and on the third day rise again. But finally he was known of them in the breaking of bread; and when he disappeared, they set out at once, returned to Jerusalem and testified, to the residue of the disciples, that the Lord had risen from the dead, and how he was known of them in the breaking of bread. No wonder they said to each other, as they returned to the city, How our hearts did burn within us, as he talked to us by the way, and opened to our understanding the scriptures of eternal truth. For it is when Jesus communes with his people, by the way, that their hearts burn within them, and are made to glow with wonder and delight on account of the fullness of his grace.

But the King also returned to Jerusalem that afternoon, and appeared to his disciples, as they sat at meat in a certain room with closed doors. He stood unex-



pectedly in their midst, with the same pure, serene and majestic presence which had both awed and attracted so many hearts, and, with the same voice they had so often heard, he pronounced the familiar salutation, Peace be unto you. They believed him to be a spirit; for the story of others was still regarded as an idle tale—news too good for credence. But, to convince them that he was verily their Risen Saviour, he called for meat, and did eat before them, showing his hands and feet, and telling them that a spirit did not possess flesh and bones as he did. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw that it was their Risen Lord. Jesus was there, in his own person, to teach them that the life beyond the scenes and shadows of death is just as real, as easily recognized and as well known, in its individual identity and personal characteristics, as is the present life of mortal men. They knew he was their Risen Jesus; for they had felt the warmth of his divine presence, and heard the tenderness of his welcome voice, and viewed the signal signs of his cruel cross. With these important facts before their own eyes, they could no longer doubt the identity of his person, or the reality of his resurrection. Thus the proofs of the King's resurrection were put to the most practical tests, that the apostles might know that he was risen from the dead, and with great power bear witness to the same in their future ministrations. The King had passed from the natural to the spiritual life, to show them how certainly and how speedily this mortal can put on immortality. He crossed over the dark stream of death and returned to life, that the world might know that the footing is firm, and the landing safe to all who follow in his footsteps. The

presence of Jesus, once more among his disciples, was like the balmy breath of spring after the chilling winds of a cold bleak winter. It filled their hearts with the purest, and holiest joys, and flooded their souls with the sacred light of a heavenly unction.

But doubting Thomas was not present, on this occasion, to see for himself the Risen King. So, when he returned, they all, with one accord, told him they had seen their Risen Lord; and how he had been known of them. But said Thomas, Except I see the prints of the nails in his hands, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe. There may be doubting Thomases among my readers, who, with all this weight of evidence before them, will virtually say, we do not believe. If so, may God pity, and pardon your unbelief.

Eight days later, or on the next Lord's day, the King again stood in the midst of his disciples, the door being shut as before, and greeted them with his usual salutation. The doubter was present, this time, to see for himself. So the Risen Master, having laid bare his wounded side, and stretched forth his holy hands with their scarred palms, turned to his incredulous disciple, whose presence showed a desire to believe the good news, and with a rebuke, such as infinite love alone can give to unbelief, he said, Thomas, reach hither thy finger, and behold the prints of the nails in my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side; and be not faithless, but believing. At once his doubts were all dismissed, his faith forever confirmed, and his heart filled with joy and exultation in believing. Words could not express the deep emotions of his solaced soul. Convinced that it was his Risen Saviour, who stood be-

fore him, he threw up his hands, while the deepest thought of his happy heart came bubbling up, and involuntarily exclaimed, My Lord and my God. To which the Saviour replied, Thomas, seeing, thou hast believed; blessed are they that having not seen, yet have believed. Christian reader, this blessing is ours. It has not been our privilege to see the Risen Lord with the natural eye, or like Thomas, to examine the prints of the nails in his hands, and thrust our hand into his wounded side; but we have viewed him with the eye of faith; for having not seen, yet we have believed in him as our Risen Redeemer, and hence the blessing is ours.

Again, some time after his resurrection, the King appeared, at the flush of dawn, to seven of his disciples, on the sea-shore of Galilee, where he manifested his wonted interest in the laborers of earth. It had been several weeks since they had seen their Risen Lord. All but the last ray of hope had faded out, and they had returned to their old occupation for a support. Peter had led the way. He said, I will wait no longer on the Master: I go a fishing. The rest said, We also go with thee. So they went and toiled all night in vain—they had caught nothing. But one moment, in the Master's presence, crowned their efforts with unparalleled success. They had spent a dark, and dangerous night upon the sea; but the divine presence ushered in a bright, and hopeful day as they neared the land. Jesus came to them, as he always comes to his disciples, with just such blessings as their peculiar circumstances demanded. He fed their hungry bodies, and feasted their fainting souls. He gave these humble fishermen their personal commissions, and sent them out to testify

to his resurrection in all the world, that the toiling millions, upon the sea of time, might behold him with the eye of faith, as he stands on the shore ready, and waiting to bless them with all needed good—ever willing to keep watch and ward over them, through all the stormy voyage of life.

Shortly after this the King stood in the midst of over five hundred persons, on a mountain in Galilee. Perchance it was the Mount of Transfiguration. This was the only place he had appointed, beforehand, to meet the disciples after his resurrection. Hence great numbers had gathered there to see their Risen Lord. How will he come? in solitude and alone? or will he be accompanied by a multitude of the heavenly hosts, to sing the triumph of his mission of mercy, and the glories of the victory he won upon the cross? Will he look like he did to the favored three, on the night of his transfiguration? Will holy men of old be found in his shining retinue? How will he appear? This was the all-absorbing question. But at length he stood in their midst, the same Jesus he ever was, only changed, in body, from the natural to the supernatural; from the mortal to the immortal. They soon recognized him as the same Jesus who hung upon the cross, until the centurion pronounced him dead, with the same identical body that laid in the new tomb, until the morning of the third day, when the corruptible was changed into the incorruptible, and death swallowed up in victory. Whispers ran through all the vast multitude: It is our Risen Lord. And they bowed to worship a Resurrected Saviour, but rose in adoration before the majesty of the King of Glory, who said to them: All power is given

unto me in heaven and in earth. He gave them collectively their world-wide commission, authorizing them to go into all nations, and preach Jesus and the resurrection to every creature. This glorious doctrine has been most faithfully preached for nearly nineteen centuries by many of the best, ablest and bravest men of earth; and it is still the sweetest, and dearest hope of a dying world.

The King's last appearance, to his disciples, was on the day of his ascension. He led them out from Jerusalem to the Mount of Olives, and gave the promise of the Spirit, which came in such great power on the day of Pentecost. When they reached the appointed place, Jesus raised his hands in blessings, the disciples bowed their heads in reverence, the words were soon spoken, and their Risen Master became their Ascended Lord.

Paul, in writing to the Corinthians on this subject, said: For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day, according to the scriptures: and that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: after that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that he was seen of James; then of all the apostles. And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time. So you see the King appeared some twelve or fifteen different times to his disciples, and others, after his resurrection, when they were permitted to examine him closely, and satisfy themselves thoroughly that it was their Risen Lord. Here is a host of competent wit-



nesses in any court, bearing with great power, the most positive testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. But if we take the evidence of men and angels, the testimony of God is infinitely greater. And God hath testified to the fact of the King's resurrection through the voice of prophecy, in the words of inspiration and in the person of the Son.

But the King's resurrection is an evidence of a general resurrection, as we have already intimated. This is the most precious thought connected with this interesting subject. God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power. Here we have a proposition and a promise inseparably connected. And the truthfulness of this grand assertion is the most positive proof of the fulfillment of the precious promise, by which it is accompanied. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. Clement, in his letter to the Corinthians, said: Let us consider, beloved, how the Lord does continually show us, that there shall be a future resurrection; of which he has made Jesus Christ the first-fruits, raising him from the dead. The sweet singer of Israel, while contemplating his own resurrection, based, it seems, entirely upon his faith in the resurrection of a Coming Messiah, whom God had sworn with an oath that he would raise up to sit on his throne, broke forth in such rich, and beautiful strains as these: Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth; my flesh also shall rest in hope. For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thy Holy One to see corruption. Thou wilt show me the path of life: in thy presence is fullness of joy;

at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore. When we look back, through eighteen centuries, into the deserted sepulchre of our Risen Saviour, we can but see it as the birth-place of his people's immortality. For, when he bursted asunder the iron bars of the tomb, and came forth a Triumphant Conqueror over death, hell and the grave, he laid a foundation-stone upon Calvary, the shock of which jarred the earth, awoke the dead and shook the nether world with terror. But when he shall bring forth the topmost stone, amid shoutings of joy, on the morning of the great resurrection day, thank God, the dominions of death and hell shall all perish, the last captive go free and the songs of the bursting sepulchres of his sleeping saints be sweeter than the chorus of the morning stars which sang together at creation's birth. The dark night of death then is not to the dying Christian a starless night. It has a promised morn, which hangs the rainbow of hope over the sleeping dust of all our sainted dead.

Personify death ; and he is a rude, and heartless invader ; a cruel and treacherous foe, destitute of pity or compassion, and deaf alike to the cries of infancy, the appeals of manhood and the silence of old age. He comes as a conqueror, and leaves the beauty of our homes a desert waste. He lays his icy fingers upon the forms of our loved ones, and they wither at his chilling touch. He is a dark prince whose mandate all must, sooner or later, obey. He is a reaper whose sickle will ultimately cut down every human being in the wide, wide world. He will continue to thrust his keen sickle in until every stalk of bearded manhood, and every flower of blooming childhood is leveled in the dust.

But in the morning of the great resurrection our Risen King will be the plague and destruction of this heedless and heartless demon. Then death, the King of terrors himself, shall die ; his empire be annihilated, and the shouts of the redeemed be heard, in triumph, amidst the ghastly ruins of his dark and desolate dominions. The resurrection of the King has given us this blessed assurance of final victory over death. Such is the precious legacy left us by a Risen Saviour. Death then is not annihilation. Humanity must be changed into immortality. The natural will ripen into a supernatural body. The lower will be transformed into a higher development of life. Our bodies must be planted in death, and rise in the resurrection, before we can enjoy the glories of the celestial life, in all its fullness. Infidelity has written upon every tomb, Death is an eternal sleep. But Christianity's epitaphs, over the portals of her sleeping saints, all declare death to be the gateway to eternal life, the shining portal to light everlasting, the vestibule of glory, the entrance leading to the blissful courts of heaven. The light, from the empty sepulchre, shines as brightly as the noon-day sun without an intervening cloud. The testimony of the Gospel confirms our most sanguine hopes. Then the world need no longer grope its way in midnight darkness. For the Risen Rock upon which we rest our faith, and base our hopes of immortality and eternal life, is as firm as the everlasting pillars of God's immutable universe.

God's works all show a gradual development toward perfection. The earth was at first formless and void. The beauty, and symmetry of a perfect world were reached by successive steps of unfolding. The work of

creation is a series of gradations, reaching its climax in man. A constant succession, and progression from the lower to the higher orders of being and life is seen in all his works and ways. The perfect day comes by gradual gradations of light, from the darkness of night: first we have the twilight; afterwards the roseate horizon, and then the sun shining in all his beauty and glory. So came the revelations of God's light and truth to a dark and benighted world, with reference to the resurrection of the body, and the immortality of the soul. The light of the resurrection dawned slowly upon the human mind. It was but dimly seen, at first, by the prophets. But as prophecy drew nearer the day of its fulfillment, this precious truth became more clear and definite. But it was left for the resurrection of the King to drive back the last cloud, and let this grand doctrine shine forth in all its wonted splendors and glory. Paganism had no fixed ideas, and Judaism but faint revelations of life beyond the narrow limits of the tomb. Immortality was the dream of poets, rather than the common faith of the people, until Jesus, in his own resurrection, brought life and immortality more fully to light through the Gospel.

The resurrection is a supernatural fact, simple and comprehensive only when viewed as lying in the realm of the supernatural. It is necessarily mysterious in its mode, because to accomplish it involves the agency of infinite power. Then, the analogies in nature are not direct proofs, but faint emblems of the resurrection of the dead. They are merely intimations of God's purpose concerning the dead, which show that the resurrection of the body is in perfect harmony with his thoughts,

as revealed to us in the reproduction of natural things. In this sense, day and night continually manifest a resurrection of the dead. The night lies down, and the day rises up: or the day departs, and the night comes on. So it is with the fruits of the earth. The seed is sown in the soil; it dissolves in the course of time, and from the dissolution God raises it up again, and from one seed brings forth much fruit. Nor is the resurrection a fact suggested by reason, or discovered by science. It is a proposition without absolute proof, either in the broad realm of nature, or the comprehensive province of philosophy. Therefore, it is a doctrine belonging exclusively to the supernatural world. It was shadowed forth, only by the types, symbols and prophecies of the Old Testament revelation; and brought fully, and forcibly before the world, only through the teachings, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus. His supernatural resurrection is the strongest argument, that can possibly be presented in favor of the general resurrection of mankind. It was beyond all cavil, an ocular demonstration of the power, and possibility of such a resurrection. And the light which has shone from his open, and empty sepulchre, for nearly nineteen centuries, is a satisfactory pledge to all his faithful followers, that their humanity will be completely swallowed up of immortality and eternal life, in the morning of the great resurrection.

The promises of the Bible are the hope of the world. These sacred oracles teach us that the resurrection of the body is a provision made and embodied in the wonderful plan of human redemption, to fit us for the enjoyment of heaven. Without this gracious provision, death would still wave his black banner in triumph over the



tomb; and his dark shadows would rise to heaven, and throw their awful gloom over all our hopes of future happiness. For our natural bodies are not suited to future glory. If there, clothed in the flesh, we would not be happy. The natural eye is dazzled by the light of the noon-day sun; much less could it endure the brightness and glory of heaven. For the King of Glory dwells in light which no man can approach, in the flesh, and live. A sight of his divine glory, in its infinite fullness, would be as a devouring fire to the weakness of human nature. Therefore, our vile bodies must be fashioned like unto his glorified body, before we can bask in his holy presence, and drink in the fullness of his divine glory. But his providence, his prophecy and his promises are all pledged to assure us, that our resurrection from the dead will qualify us for heaven and immortal glory, if we but fall asleep in Jesus. No matter how great the miracle required to change our bodies from the mortal to the immortal, that weighs nothing when placed in the balances with infinite power. Then the consummation of our well-founded hopes is certain. For since Christ could not be holden of death, neither can those who sleep in Jesus. They must rise again. The King is their resurrection and their life; their lives are hid with God in him, therefore, because he lives, they shall live also. In other words, the Risen Jesus was the first-fruits of those who sleep; the first sheaf of the great coming harvest; the first trophy won from the dark dominions of death; the first sleeper of countless millions to awake from the sleep of death, and rise to live for evermore.

Our Risen King is the great Head of Humanity who

led the way from the prison-house of death, up to the courts of immortality and eternal life. And his glorified body is a pattern, after which he has promised to fashion the glorified bodies of all his sleeping saints, on the morning of the great resurrection. Then our resurrection life will be a much higher and holier life than this we live in the flesh. It will lift us up to a more elevated plane of being, where there will be a much more extensive unfolding and a decidedly fuller development of all our mental, moral and spiritual faculties. This resurrection of the body will complete and perfect in us the great work of human redemption. It will reunite a redeemed soul with a redeemed body; and while the former is stamped with the image of the Father, it will fashion the latter after the likeness of the Son. This will perfect man's salvation from the dominion of sin and death. And, retaining his wonted identity, with a glorified soul in a glorified body, he will enter the courts of endless glory, in perfect harmony with all his celestial surroundings, a legitimate and honored heir of heaven.

The King's resurrection, then, is the prelude to that great coming resurrection, which shall call from their sleeping dust all the long line of Adam's apostate race. Paul says, that Christ's resurrection proves the resurrection of all men. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order. Christ the first-fruits; afterwards they that are Christ's at his coming. \* \* \* But some man will say, How are the dead raised up, and with what body do they come? Thou fool, that

which thou sowest is not quickened except it die. \* \* \* All flesh is not the same flesh: but\* there is one flesh of men, another of beasts, another of fishes and another of birds. There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial; but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. There is one glory of the sun, another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differeth from another star in glory. We understand the apostle to mean, that just as the heavenly bodies, the sun, moon and stars transcend, in beauty and worth, the rugged mountains, dark whirlpools and gloomy caverns of earth; so our resurrected bodies shall be more beautiful and valuable, than our natural bodies: that just as one star excels another, in beauty, brilliancy and glory, so our celestial bodies shall be far more beautiful, and glorious than these vile corrupt bodies of ours. For, in this immediate connection, he adds, So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. Yes, all our bodies are to be sown natural bodies—laid in the graves bodies of flesh and blood: but on the morning of the resurrection, they will come forth from the tombs spiritual, and immortal bodies. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. \* \* \* Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God which giveth us the victory

through our Risen Christ. Oh! how glorious this anticipated victory over death.

How touchingly sympathetic the soul-inspiring language of the King himself, to the bereaved sisters of the dead, and buried Lazarus, upon this all-important subject. They came out to meet the Beloved Master, fell prostrate at his feet, bathed in tears, and each of them said, Lord if thou hadst been here my brother had not died. Jesus answered, Thy brother shall live again. Martha said, I know he shall live again, in the resurrection at the last day. Then Jesus replied, I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live again; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Then Jesus came weeping to the tomb, commanded them to take away the stone, lifted his heart to the Father in prayer and cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. And the dead did come forth, a fit subject to be loosed and set at liberty, though bound in grave-clothes. Lazarus had been named and numbered among the dead of earth, but he arose from the tomb at the call of Jesus, in the full possession of life. He had experienced the dread mysteries of death, in a four-days journey upon its dark and gloomy path; but returned, as much alive as ever, at the call of a voice mightier than death. He had tested the solemn realities of the grave, in a four-nights sleep in its cold, dismal embrace; but came back from the sepulchre, in possession of the fullness of all his faculties, and the wonted tenderness of every emotional feeling, which constituted him the much-beloved brother and genial friend, without a trace of the destroyer's power to be seen upon his old person, or ex-

perienced in his new lease upon life. The resurrection of the King, who thus manifested his power to raise others from the dead, has rolled the stone of unbelief away from the tomb of human hopes, painted the rainbow of immortality on the black cloud of death and lit up the pathway, from this dark world, to the mansions of heavenly light.

There are many precious thoughts connected with the resurrection of the dead. We have often felt, in contemplating the reunion with loved ones, that we would not give up, for this world, the sweet assurance, that when we meet a sainted mother, in the glory-land, it will be the same mother we loved so well on earth. But when we see her there, it will not be as when we last saw her here. Her brow will not be furrowed with care ; her eyes will not be dimmed with age ; her head will not be silvered over with gray hairs ; neither will her body be cold, and lifeless in death. But arrayed, with all the beauty, grace and glory of spiritual womanhood, she will meet, and greet us with a long and loving welcome to the courts of endless life. This is the fashion, Christian friends, after which we are to meet our fathers and mothers, with all our sainted dead, in the better world. But for all these lively, and soul-inspiring hopes we are indebted to the resurrection, and teachings of the Risen Redeemer.

But there is also a sad thought, yea, a sad reality connected with this subject. Marvel not at this, said the Saviour, for the day, and the hour is coming, in the which all that are in their graves shall come forth, they that have done good unto the resurrection of eternal life, but they that have done evil unto the resurrection



of damnation. Sad thought indeed! Heaven have mercy on those who are posting their way toward a resurrection to eternal death! Dear dying sinners, since life is so uncertain, death inevitable and especially in view of the fact that you must rise again, will you allow me, as one who loves your souls, to insist on your asking yourselves, in the language of another, this one solemn question :

How shall I leave my tomb?

In triumph, or regret?

A fearful, or a joyful doom?

A curse, or blessing meet?

And since, as death overtakes you, eternity will meet you, the judgment greet you and, if finally impenitent, hell with all its horrors must receive you, will you not also allow me to insist, that you give yourself no peace of mind, no ease of conscience, and no rest of soul until, in the language of another sweet poet, you can triumphantly sing :

In expectation sweet,

I'll wait, and watch, and pray,

Till Christ's triumphal car I meet

And see an endless day.

He will come. We write, as his ambassador, to assure you that the Great Deliverer will come, death fall beneath his sword, his joyful prisoners burst their bars and rise to meet their Risen Lord. Then the gladdest song of all ages will be heard above the saddest lamentations of time—even the song of eternal redemption.

We have one more thought on this subject, too precious to be omitted. In this life, some of us have bodies which are maim, lame or halt; bodies with blinded

eyes, deaf ears or faltering tongues ; bodies racked with fever, tortured with pain, wasting away with consumption or bowed down with age and infirmities. But thanks be to God, in the morning of the resurrection, when the bodies of the sleeping saints shall all come floating in upon the spring-tide of immortality and eternal life, there will be no Paul there troubled with a thorn in the flesh, no Moses slow of speech, no Jacob with a thigh out of joint, no Lazarus afflicted with sores, no Job covered with boils, and no Methuselah bowed down with age and infirmities. But, in the language of another sweet poet :

Arrayed in glorious grace,  
Shall these vile bodies shine ;  
And every shape, and every face  
Look heavenly and divine.

Such is the evidence of the King's resurrection ; and such its bearing upon our eternal destiny.



## THE ASCENSION OF THE KING.

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### CHAPTER X.

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*When he ascended upon high, he led captivity captive.*—EPH. 4: 8.

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THE mysterious interval between the resurrection and ascension of the King is full of interest and instruction. Though still manifesting himself personally to men, the Risen Jesus was no longer of earth. He was now a spiritual being, from the unknown regions of the dead. He appeared to his disciples, only at intervals, leaving no trace as to whence he came, or whither he went. His visits were much like those of angels in olden time. He mingled with men no more, as in the days of the flesh. He gathered them no more around the festal board. He led his apostles no more, in their journeyings over the hills, and through the valleys of the Holy Land. The personal familiarity of other days would not have been in keeping with his glorified humanity. They were still of the earth, earthy; but he seemed ready at any moment to lift his glorified body up to heaven. Though occasionally in each other's presence, they were separated by an infinite distance. His disciples were still the heirs of time; but the King was now a being of eternity. They were still mortal; but he had put on immortality. They were still servants on earth; but he was now the King of Heaven.



The King of Glory.





These precious visitations of the Glorified King inspired his subjects with renewed zeal, implicit confidence and the most enthusiastic devotion. They were of such a spiritual caste as to convince them, that their Master was about to quit this world. So they were gradually prepared for the separation. Prior to his crucifixion he said he had many things to reveal to them, which they were not then prepared to receive. But, inasmuch as what would have been incomprehensible before his death and resurrection, was no longer dark or mysterious, being seen in the light of an empty grave and a shining cross, he now communicated many important truths pertaining to his dual kingdom in the world.

The crucifixion of the King was a fearful stroke ; but his resurrection had imparted a lively hope to his apostles. It had taught them how to bring good out of evil, light out of darkness and life out of death. It learned them to build, out of their deepest griefs and dying hopes, a great stairway from earth to heaven.

But the ascension of the King is his transcendent miracle. If we had no other evidence of his Messiahship, than the fact of his reception up into glory, this would be sufficient to satisfy any reasonable, or rational mind that he was all he claimed to be. He had spoken to his apostles, more than once, of his departure from the earth—his return to the Father—his ascension to heaven. But the time had come for this greatest of all miracles—the crowning event in the King's history. So about the fortieth day after his resurrection, in the golden light of an oriental noonday's sun, he led his devoted disciples out toward the sacred heights of Bethany. They soon reached Mount Olivet ; and while they gazed

with admiration, and awe upon the heavenly scene, the holy angels descended most gracefully to escort their King home to glory. And, as they came, the gentle breezes were laden with the richest freight of melody ever wafted through the soft blue skies of the Holy Land. His parting benediction was lovingly pronounced, and thankfully received. Then, unlike the prophet Elijah, who was taken to heaven in a fiery chariot, the Risen Redeemer was gently borne upward on a fleecy cloud, until he vanished from their enraptured vision. The golden skies formed a radiant vista, through which the Glorified King rode up into the Heaven of heavens. He ascended with the matchless might, and majesty of a God; and yet with that calmness, and serenity befitting the genius of his Gospel, and the charming characteristics of its Divine Author. He speeds his way in triumph over the fields of light towards the gates of the Eternal City. And as he nears the pearly portals of the peaceful Paradise of God, the shining retinue sings with holy, heavenly rapture:

“High raise your heads, ye lofty gates,  
For see, the King of glory waits;  
Ye everlasting doors arise,  
And make a passage as he flies.

“But hark! the heavenly hosts inquire,  
Who is this mighty conquering King?  
In cheerful strains the answering choir  
Lift high their voice, and sweetly sing:

“He is the Lord of boundless might,  
High raise your heads, ye gates of light;  
He conquered death, and hell, and sin;  
Lift up, ye doors, he shall come in.

“But hark! again the angels say,  
Who is this mighty Conquering King?  
Who rises to the realms of day;  
Whose praise with such applause ye sing?

“The Lord, of boundless power possessed;  
God over all, forever blessed:  
The Lord of hosts, the most renowned,  
The King of endless glory crowned.”

So the everlasting doors were lifted up, and the gates of pearl stood wide ajar; while the Conquering King swept in, and up the golden streets of the heavenly Jerusalem, mounted his Father's throne and began to share that glory with him again, which he enjoyed before the world began. He led captivity captive, ascended upon high and was received into glory, amid the loudest hosannas, and the sweetest hallelujahs of heaven.

But this Ascended King is ultimately to reign over a universal kingdom, and reign eternally. His mediatorial dominion shall become universal on the earth, and his triumphant reign will be eternal in heaven. Jesus is the legitimate King of Zion, the acknowledged Heir to Israel's throne. Therefore he has a legal right to rule. But he is also King, by divine appointment, and was anointed of the Lord, with an unction which vested him with all power, and supreme authority, both on earth and in heaven. Then, the King's right to exercise all the regal functions pertaining to a universal kingdom, and to enjoy all the royal privileges of a great spiritual sovereignty can not be called in question. He is no usurper. And though he was forced to wade through blood to the throne; it was his own precious blood, spilt for the redemption of the world. He was a Sovereign

from all eternity. He ever exercised the functions of a Rightful Ruler. As Deity, a necessary, and essential dominion belongs to him, which is without beginning of time, or end of days. His divine prerogatives remain ever the same. He is the Eternal King; and must therefore exercise universal dominion, and reign eternally.

This Ascended King, as the world's Mediator, acts by divine appointment. He wields only a delegated power. However, this appointment antedates the fall of man. But not until after his ascension, was the King vested with the full authority of his mediatorial reign. It was not until then, that his regal splendors, as Mediator, were unveiled to men and angels. It was then that his diadem of glory first shone forth, with transcendent, and uniform lustre. But this appointment, of the Son to the regal office, did not divest the Father of his inherent right to reign. Nor was this special delegation of divine authority, to the Mediatorial King, any surrender of dominion upon the part of the Holy Trinity. The Godhead always holds the balance of power, and reigns in perfect harmony, through the joint will, and common purpose of its triune existence, no matter which person of the Trinity serves as the Executive of the divine administration. But this Mediatorial King shall continue to reign; for no power can stay the progress of his dual kingdom towards universal dominion. The heathen may rage; the people imagine vain things, and the rulers of the earth take council together against the Anointed of the Lord, but the broad empire of King Emmanuel shall continue to grow—dominion after dominion, and kingdom after kingdom shall be added unto it, until it includes all the kingdoms of this world. For,

“Jesus shall reign, where’er the sun  
Doth his successive journeys run ;  
His kingdom stretch from shore to shore,  
Till moons shall wax and wane no more.”

The name of Jesus is a great factor, in the world's history, which increases in power, with every succeeding generation. The divine potency of his lessons and life, in their sacred influence upon men, has penetrated, and is leavening the great mass of humanity.

But the dreadful contest for supremacy, which has been raging for six thousand years between good and evil, in this world, has shown Jesus to be a King, who has never ceased to reign in, and rule over the hearts of his subjects. Every official act of his, down through the passing ages, prior to, and after his incarnation, was a demonstration of his kingship. At his nativity he did not simply enter upon, but was already in possession of, his royal prerogatives. He was born a King. Heaven and earth both bestowed royal honors upon him, at his birth. His disciples recognized his right to reign, even during the period of his deepest humiliation ; and Pilate honored him with the title of King, while hanging, like a vile malefactor, upon the Roman cross. And ever since then the weight of his royal sceptre has been felt among the nations ; and his universal authority will soon be acknowledged by all the kings of the earth. For his Father hath made him his first-born, higher than, or supreme over, the kings of the earth. And, as King of Nations, he hath promised him universal dominion in the world. So all earthly rulers, whether great or small, subordinate or supreme ; all civil authorities, whether legislative, judi-



cial or executive, are finally to recognize him as Chief Magistrate of the world, vested with supreme authority, and exercising universal dominion. Yes, the period is hastening on, by sacred bards foretold, when all nations will gladly rally around the standard of the cross; and then the broad empire of heaven's Ascended King will know no bounds, save those of a boundless universe.

A peaceful, prosperous and happy reign awaits this King of kings on earth. This mighty empire which he is establishing in the world, upon the pure principles of undying, self-sacrificing love, will never perish. Its sway over the hearts and consciences of men will grow wider and deeper with the march of time; and finally ripen into universal, and perfect adoration, during the millennial reign of a thousand years, which shall gladden all hearts and homes on earth.

Having crossed the threshold of death, and conquered the king of terrors, the King of Glory claims the trophies of his matchless victory and asserts his right to lead forth the captives rescued from the dominions of darkness and death, into his blessed kingdom of endless light and life. He will make good his claim to be the resurrection and the life of his sleeping saints. He is the only hope of a dead and dying world. He has promised his saints, that they shall sail over the bright ocean of eternity beyond the dark sea of time. He says, The darkness of death shall withdraw her sable curtains from the tombs of the just and the morning of the resurrection light up, with her immortal rays, the glories of an eternal day. In the lapse of time, this Conquering King will trample down the dominions of death and hell, and lead captivity captive, the ransomed millions of earth.

For this Ascended King, accompanied by legions of angels, shall come again upon the rolling clouds of heaven, in like manner as he went up to glory. But he shall come without sin unto salvation. And seated in mid-air, upon his great white throne, fit emblem of his imperial justice, he will call the world to judgment. The mighty archangel will step forth; and placing one foot upon the land and one upon the sea, with his silver trumpet he will sound the funeral note of time. He will blow a blast so loud and shrill, that it will awake the dead of earth on land and in sea. Then we will all appear before the judgment seat of Christ. Infinite wisdom will characterize all the proceedings of the Just Judge. And his matchless power will be a compliment to his infinite wisdom. All who pass through the life and death tests of this dread judgment, will be forced to submit to his infinitely just and righteous decisions. Even the condemned will have to say amen to their own eternal damnation.

This Celestial Conqueror will not leave the field of battle, until he makes all enemies his footstool; and sways a universal and unlimited sceptre over the world. "For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." Yes, even death, that grim monster of despair, which for six thousand years has laid his cold and icy fingers upon the lovely, the beautiful and the good of earth, that demon of darkness, who has claimed for his prey the king upon his throne, as well as the peasant in his lowly cot, that iron-clad warrior of hell, who has numbered the millions of our race, with the pale-sheeted nations, which now sleep in the quiet

cities of the dead, shall at length meet with a shameful and ignominious defeat. Even death shall be swallowed up in victory, at the last grand and glorious conquest of the Victorious King upon earth. For he will snatch those who remain alive at his coming, from the very jaws of death; and, with those who come forth from their graves, they shall be caught up with him in the air. And then the melting firmament of the heavens will echo to the triumphant shouts of the redeemed, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

In ancient times, all noted conquerors followed their conquests with triumphal marches. Returning, with the spoils of war, and the captives taken, the conqueror, in the van of his victorious army, with kings and noted captives chained to his chariot wheels, would march, in triumphal procession, to marshal music which stirred the public heart, and fired the patriotism of the populace, until the city rang with the shouts of applause, and honor to the victor and his victorious army. These processions were the glory of nations—the consummation of long-repeated struggles and conquests—the crowning days of hard-fought battles and bloody victories. They were days of national triumph, and personal honor, which marked new epochs in the history of nations; and gave fame and fortune to the world's historic heroes.

So the Ascended King is only waiting the consummation of his work on earth, to have his triumphal march. He is only waiting the day of finished victory,

when, accompanied by legions of angels, he will come, gather up the redeemed of earth—the trophies of his matchless victory, and take up his heavenly march for the city of the New Jerusalem. Grand, glorious and triumphant indeed will be the march of this victorious army, with the Captain of our Salvation in the van of his shining retinue, which will fill the heavens with its glory.

There will be no captives, in that procession, groaning, and wreaking in blood, at his chariot-wheels. But the Conqueror and the conquered will all rejoice together, as they speed on in triumph over the plains of light, toward the Blessed City. Listen! ye lovers of marshal music, to the grand chorus which bows the lofty heavens to lend a listening ear to its melting strains—music far sweeter than the chorus of the morning stars which sang together at creation's birth. Oh! for the tongue of Dante to sing, as, from the highest circle of Paradise, he beheld the magnificent vision of all the events of time consummated in this heavenly march, and sang in holy exultation,

“ Behold the hosts  
Of Christ's triumphal march, and all the fruit  
Harvested by the rolling of the spheres.”

Oh! for the vision of Kepler to discern, in the movements of the planets, the timing of Messiah's advent; and see all the heavenly bodies marshalled to do him homage, and furnish music for his celestial march. Oh! for the fire of Handel to kindle prophecy, story and suffering into song; and set all things in earth and heaven, from the symphony of shepherds to the grand chorus of archangels, aglow with the music of the Conquering King's triumphal march. But neither Dante, Kepler

nor Handel, though they called upon all things celestial and terrestrial, physical and moral, visible and invisible, ever reached the lofty strains of the sweet singer of Israel, when he tunes his lay to immortal eloquence, and sings, as the heavenly hosts sweep on toward the New Jerusalem. Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of Glory shall come in. Who is this King of Glory? inquire the keepers of the gates. The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle, is the response. Then the grand chorus salutes their ears again, Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of Glory shall come in. Who is this King of Glory? The Lord of hosts, he is the King of Glory.

The pearly gates fly open; the Conquering King passes in, in triumph, with his ransomed hosts, and the inquiry comes: Who are these? The answer is given: These are they, who came up through many tribulations, have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. And the Eternal City rings with the loud hosannas, and sweet hallelujahs of welcome to the Triumphant King, and his victorious army.

Honor, majesty and dominion, be unto him, who sitteth upon the Throne of thrones, as Lord of lords forever, and ever, for he is the King of Glory.















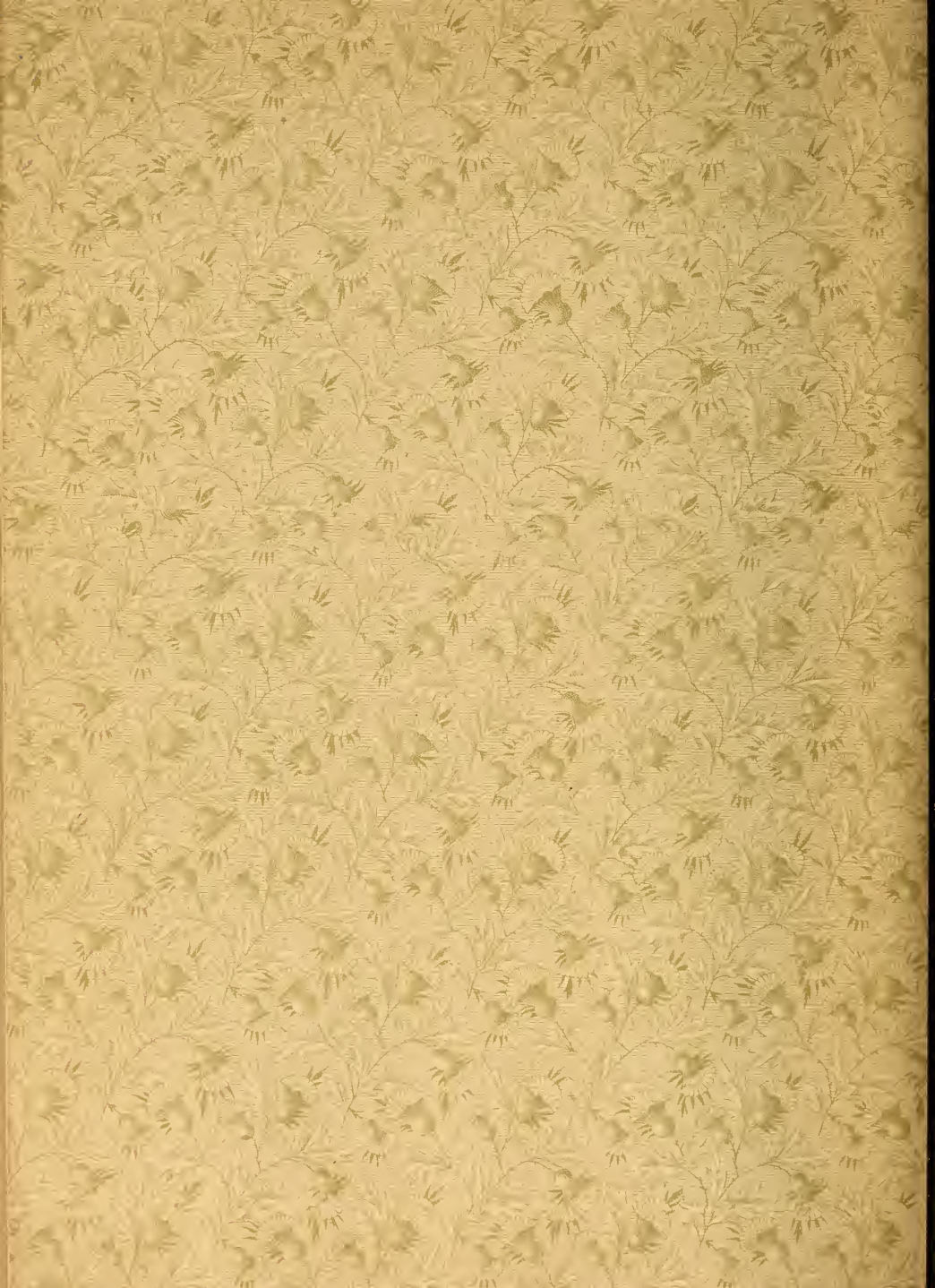


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